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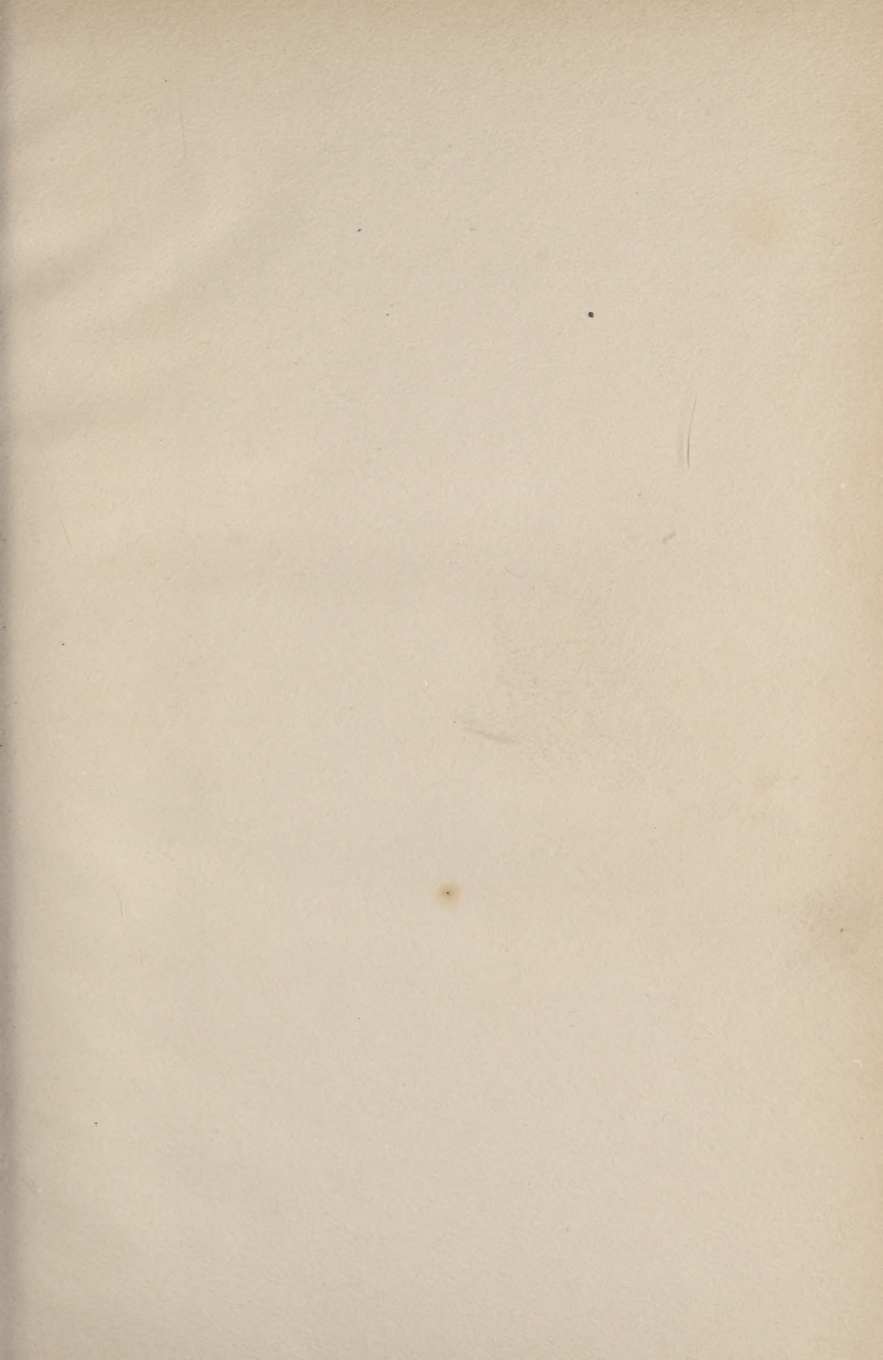


























THE  
EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

BEING

THE ELY LECTURES FOR 1890

BY

LEWIS FRENCH STEARNS

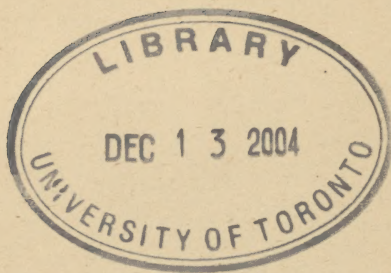
PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN BANGOR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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TO MY WIFE

WITHOUT WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT  
THESE LECTURES WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN  
WHOSE SYMPATHY AND COUNSEL  
HAVE BEEN MY CONSTANT RELIANCE IN THEIR PREPARATION,  
AND WHOSE EFFICIENT HELP  
HAS LIGHTENED THE LABOR OF CARRYING THEM THROUGH THE PRESS  
THEY NOW IN THEIR COMPLETED FORM  
ARE  
DEDICATED







## PREFACE.

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THESE lectures were delivered to the students of Union Theological Seminary, in the Adams Chapel, during the latter part of January and the earlier part of February, 1890, as one of the courses upon the foundation established in the Seminary by Mr. Zebulon Stiles Ely, in the following terms :

“The undersigned gives the sum of ten thousand dollars to the Union Theological Seminary of the city of New York, to found a lectureship in the same, the title of which shall be ‘The Elias P. Ely Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity.’

“The course of lectures given on this foundation is to comprise any topics that serve to establish the proposition that Christianity is a religion from God, or that it is the perfect and final form of religion for man.

“Among the subjects discussed may be :

“The Nature and Need of a Revelation ;

“The Character and Influence of Christ and his Apostles ;

“The Authenticity and Credibility of the Scriptures, Miracles, and Prophecy ;

“The Diffusion and Benefits of Christianity ; and

“The Philosophy of Religion in its Relation to the Christian System.

“Upon one or more of such subjects a course of ten public lectures shall be given, at least once in two or three years. The appointment of the lecturer is to be by the concurrent



action of the directors and faculty of said Seminary and the undersigned ; and it shall ordinarily be made two years in advance."

The lectures are here given as originally prepared. It was thought best in delivering them to reduce their number to eight, a course which necessitated considerable condensation and omission.

An Appendix has been added, in which will be found references and acknowledgments to the authorities consulted in the preparation of the work, and some illustrative matter which could not well be incorporated into the text.

The lectures are now offered to the Christian public in the earnest hope that they may contribute in some degree to the advancement of the Saviour's kingdom.

BANGOR, ME., October 1, 1890.



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# THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE







# THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

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## LECTURE I.

### THE EVIDENCES OF TO-DAY.

My choice of a subject has been determined by several considerations. In the first place, I am desirous of presenting to you young men, whom it is my privilege to address, some aspects of the great field of Christian Evidences likely to be particularly prominent during the generation in which you are called to labor, and therefore calculated to be of especial value in your practical work. Then, it is my wish to leave untouched those topics that have been already so ably and successfully treated by my predecessors in this Lectureship. Finally, looking at the subject from the scientific point of view, I am convinced that this is an opportune time for the discussion of a most important department of apologetics, which hitherto, though not entirely neglected, has received, for the most part, scant recognition. For these reasons I have selected as our theme *The Evidence of Christian Experience*. I pray, that in our discussion of it we may have the aid of him with whom that experience brings us into personal in-



tellektual, as well as spiritual, contact, and who has so freely promised his Spirit to all who ask him.

In the present introductory lecture, I shall aim to find a background for the high topics that are to be presented, in a brief survey of the changes which have taken place in the form and method of the Christian evidences during the century upon whose last decade we are soon to enter.

Of the existence of such changes every thoughtful Christian scholar is aware. The theological sciences are no exception to the law of development which governs all the provinces of scientific investigation. The truth of the Christian revelation abides the same, though even this was given to mankind by a gradual process extending over many ages. But the church of Christ, notwithstanding the constant aid of the Holy Spirit, enters only by degrees into the possession of the truth given it in the redemptive revelation. The kingdom of God comes but slowly in the intellectual sphere, as well as in the moral and spiritual. The Christian world grows wiser in divine things, as it grows better, not all at once but little by little. Hence we must regard divinity as a progressive science. And hence we shall expect to find that science which has for its object the proof and defence of the truths set forth by divinity in systematic form, in like manner progressive. As the ages advance and the unending battle against unbelief and error, in which the militant church is ever engaged, goes forward, we learn to see more clearly through the smoke and confusion of the fight the invincible fortress of our faith and the methods by which the foe is to be dislodged from its approaches.

At the beginning of the present century comparative



peace reigned in the Anglo-Saxon section of Protestant Christendom. The old deism, which made its appearance during the latter part of the seventeenth century, and flourished during the first half of the eighteenth, had received its death-blow. On the practical side it had been overcome by the great religious revival that began in the work of the Wesleys and Whitefield, and swept in a life-giving stream over Great Britain and America, giving rise to the great Methodist denomination and to the Evangelical party in the Church of England, and bringing new spiritual power to the other bodies of orthodox Christians. On the intellectual side deism had been vanquished with its own weapons by a long series of eminent Christian scholars, among whom we naturally think first of Bishop Butler, the author of the famous *Analogy*, and Archdeacon Paley, the author of the no less famous *Evidences*.

Let us look at deism, for the purpose of better understanding its attack upon Christianity, and then at the system of defence by which a foe so vigorous and formidable was at last completely routed and driven from the field.

Deism had its origin in the decline of the religious life that followed the English Civil War and culminated in the period subsequent to the Revolution. It was the manifestation in the religious sphere of the great revolt against authority which characterized the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and had its roots in the Renaissance and the Reformation. The aim of deism was to bring religion into complete agreement with reason. By reason it meant, not the reason of the Christian, not the reason of the scholar or philosopher, but the reason of the common man. This was set up as the arbi-



ter in the sphere of religious truth. Whatever dogmas or assumed facts were repugnant to it must be discarded. The deists believed with undoubting assurance that the reason can furnish out of its own resources the great fundamental truths of religion. They claimed that the existence of one supreme personal Deity is clearly recognizable in the constitution of nature and of the human soul. The tendency of deism, however, was to separate God altogether from the world, and to confine his efficiency to the creation of the universe and the establishment of its laws. Though personal, he was not so much a living God as a *Primum Movens*, postulated by the reason to explain the origin of things. Great stress was laid upon man's obligation to serve God as his will is revealed in the law of conscience. The doctrines of immortality and of a future state of rewards and punishments were also taught.

Miracles were discarded as violations of the order of nature, and hence unworthy of God. The later deists availed themselves of Hume's argument against miracles, derived from the fallibility of human testimony and its worthlessness when opposed to the universal experience of men respecting the uniformity of natural law, though Hume's sceptical philosophy was destructive of all that was positive in their own beliefs. Supernatural revelation, like miracles, was denied. Basing themselves firmly upon the platform of natural religion, the deists rejected all those teachings of the Christian scriptures which go beyond it. The Bible was regarded as valuable only in so far as it is a "republication of the religion of nature." The doctrines of the Trinity, of Christ's divinely human person, of the atonement, of the new birth, and all the other distinctively Christian



truths, were rejected as irrational mysteries. If any especial significance was attached to the Saviour's teachings, it was on the ground that he was a restorer of the true doctrine of natural religion.

It is not needful for our purpose to give any but the most general statement of the tenets of deism. The movement was a singular mixture of strength and weakness. Its strength lay in the great truths which it maintained. We may be sure that no religious or philosophical system which has for any long period dominated the minds of considerable numbers of men can be wholly false. There is always some element of truth in it, and it is for this reason that men accept it. The religious truth asserted by deism is of the highest importance. God, duty, and immortality are the invincible pillars upon which the whole superstructure of religion rests. Moreover, deism was but the logical consequence of the rationalistic tendency of the prevalent orthodoxy, which was quite as earnest as the heterodoxy of the time in the demand that reason should be made the test and standard of truth.

But deism had also its elements of weakness, which were certain in the end to open the way for its overthrow. It held a half-way and defenceless position between Christian theism and the vigorous philosophical systems of scepticism, pantheism, and materialism. It was in constant danger of being caught in the open field with no place of refuge at hand. It is inconsistent to admit the existence of a personal God, the Author of nature and its laws, and yet to deny the possibility of miracles and special revelation. It argues an imperfect use of the reason to find fault with Christianity because of its mysteries and difficulties,



when mysteries and difficulties equally great exist in nature, which, according to the distinct admission of the deist, is of divine constitution. If there be a personal God, and if there be a system of facts and truths purporting to be a revelation from him, accredited by miracles and other infallible evidences of divine origin, the question as to the reality of the revelation becomes a purely historical one. Consistency requires that deism should accept these conclusions, or else abandon its doctrine of a God altogether and go over into one of the non-theistic camps.<sup>1</sup>

The evidences of Christianity which brought about the downfall of deism, and which at the beginning of the present century had been wrought into a well-defined system, find typical expression in the famous works of Butler<sup>2</sup> and Paley<sup>3</sup> already referred to. The former deals most fully with the philosophical questions involved. It is an argument *ex concessio*. It does not enter into the general question as to the possibility of miracles and revelation or their antecedent probability. Still less does it follow the orthodoxy of the earlier stages in the deistical controversy in the attempt to prove the truth of the Christian doctrines by showing their conformity with the tests and standards of reason. Its task is the more modest one of showing that, granting the existence of a personal God (as the deist was quite willing to do), the presumption of nature is favorable to the truth of Christianity and the validity of its evidences. The deist has no right to raise objections against revelation which bear equally against the constitution and course of nature. He has no right to object to a line of argumentation, in proof of revelation, which he accepts with regard to all the common affairs



of life. It is not claimed that the evidences of Christianity give absolute proof, but only that they afford such reasonable probability as lays every candid and right-minded man under obligation to act upon the assumption that the facts and doctrines with which they are concerned are true.

The objections being thus removed, the way is opened for the positive evidence, which is presented in its typical form by Paley. This is pre-eminently the proof from miracles, though the arguments derived from the fulfilment of prophecy, and from other facts confirmatory to the truth of Christianity, find a place alongside of it. The chief stress is laid upon the historical evidence that the miracles actually occurred. This rests upon the testimony of the original witnesses contained in the Christian scriptures, the authenticity of which is proved by the commonly accepted methods of literary evidence. The credibility of the witnesses is shown by the fact, substantiated not only by the statements of the scriptures but also by contemporary history, that they "passed their lives in labors, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts." <sup>4</sup> Here is historical evidence which carries with it such a high degree of probability as must satisfy every reasonable mind. But if the miracles actually occurred, the Christian system must be a revelation from God and is to be accepted upon divine authority. What are the contents of this revelation, is a matter of interpretation, about which Christians may differ. But whatever is clearly recognized as taught in the scriptures, whether fact or doctrine, is to be implicitly received.



Here, then, is a definite system of evidence, admirably adapted for its purpose. There can be no question that it was successful. The deistical assaults upon revealed religion were driven back by the deist's own methods. Reason was met by reason. The fight was upon ground of the unbeliever's own choice, and his defeat was utter. All was done with consummate skill. The candid seeker after truth clearly perceives the balance turning to the Christian side. The world has never seen finer reasoning of its kind, more convincing, better sustained, characterized by more of the clearness and simplicity of superior truth, than that of Butler and Paley.

The works of these two great writers became the text-books in English and American institutions of learning. An extensive evidential literature now made its appearance, following the lines just indicated with more or less conformity in detail. This type of apologetics maintained itself till long past the middle of the present century. Most of the educated men now in middle life received their training in the evidences from text-books which are merely a reworking of Butler's and Paley's materials, if not from the treatises of those authors themselves. Even now the influence of this system is widely felt.

Meantime, however, changes have taken place in the philosophical and theological worlds which have quite revolutionized the problem of apologetics.

The assault upon Christianity has changed its character. Deism yielded to other forms of unbelief. Dislodged in England, it passed over to the Continent, where, in the guise of materialism and atheism, it led a wild and stormy life in France, and then found welcome and



house-room in Germany, sobering itself there to the staid and respectable ways of rationalism. But it carried its death-warrant with it. It was doomed to perish of its own inherent weakness. The great movement of philosophical thought which began with Kant and culminated in Hegel found the so-called "vulgar rationalism" in such a state of decadence that stalwart blows were scarcely needed for its overthrow. The new pantheism, in the vigor of its youth and the enthusiasm of its hopes, made easy work with the old deism, and then turned—at first with friendly words and offers of alliance—to settle its account with Christianity.

The Christian faith has probably never encountered a more dangerous adversary than this German pantheism. The insidiousness of its approach and the cunning of its attack gave it a tremendous advantage. Deism, in the days of its vigor, was a straightforward, honest, enemy, dealing hard blows and ready to receive them. Pantheism came with a Judas-kiss and a "Hail, Master!" Its evil intent was hidden under pious phraseology. As one listens to its teachings, one is tempted to say with Margaret in Goethe's *Faust*:

"Das ist alles recht schön und gut ;  
Ungefähr sagt das der Pfarrer auch,  
Nur mit ein bischen andern Worten." <sup>5</sup>

It had also its element of truth, which gave plausibility to its claims, especially when set in opposition to the deistical rationalism. The immanence of God in the world and the human soul, which deism repudiated, it emphasized. Where deism denied miracles and revelation, pantheism made every common phenomenon of nature a miracle, and all history a continuous



revelation of God. It found an intelligible, though unorthodox, meaning for the Christian mysteries of the Trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, and the new birth. If it denied the personality of God and the conscious immortality of the soul, it did so in language not readily understood in its true meaning by the masses.

The pantheistic philosophy did not discard Christianity, but it attempted to give it at every point a naturalistic explanation. This it did with a wealth of resource, a depth of insight, a sympathetic appreciation, a skill of delineation, which deserve the highest admiration. As has already been intimated, it represented the whole history of mankind as a continuous revelation of God. The ethnic religions exhibit the lower stages in the process, giving under imperfect forms of symbolical representation the eternal truths of man's spiritual relations. Christianity is the highest stage, the "absolute religion," which gathers up into itself all the scattered fragments of truth in the other systems. Still, Christianity itself gives the truth in the form of symbols, and it is the part of philosophy to disengage the substance from the form and reveal the eternal idea which underlies the figurate representation.

The strength of the pantheistic attack lay in its remarkable power of historical criticism. From what has just been said we can readily see that it furnished a new and most effective historical method. Deism had attempted to explain historical Christianity in accordance with its philosophical principles, but it had gone little beyond the blunt denial of the supernatural element in the scriptures, and had not hesitated, when pressed to account for the presence of this element, to charge the



Bible writers with forgery and fraud. Its procedure was poor and awkward compared with that of pantheism. The latter, while equally strong in its denial of the supernatural and miraculous in the Bible, undertook to show that they are the result of a perfectly natural development, according to which the idea constantly tends to clothe itself in figurate and symbolical representations, and these to attach themselves to historical facts. In this way men unconsciously idealize history, covering it with a growth of poetical or legendary additions. Or, with more definite intent, they manipulate the history to make it the vehicle of some doctrine, itself a symbolical representation of the dominant idea, under the influence of which they are all the time unconsciously acting. It is the part of the historical critic to reverse the process, to separate the ideas from the symbols, and both from the facts, and to reconstruct the history in its true and original form.

The publication of Strauss's *Leben Jesu*,<sup>6</sup> and of the writings of Baur<sup>7</sup> and the Tübingen school, marks the beginning of the overt attack upon Christianity. The former struck at the very citadel of Christian truth by its attempt to give a naturalistic explanation of the gospel story of Christ's person and life through the theory of myths that grew up spontaneously in the generation after the Saviour's death. The latter, with a much greater outlay of learning and profundity of thought, sought to account for the New-Testament books by the assumption that they were *Tendenz-Schriften*, writings with a theological purpose, designed to represent one or the other side of an alleged struggle for ascendancy between the parties of Peter and Paul, or to bring about a reconciliation between them—ascribing



the larger number of these books, including the four Gospels, to the second century after the Christian era. In both cases the person of Christ, though recognized as historical, is represented as seen through a haze of later opinions, so that all that is divine in his essential nature, and miraculous in his life and works, is to be explained as the addition of a subsequent age. Jesus was a good man and true, divine as all men are divine, through the immanence of the universal Spirit, a man who perhaps more than others realized the divine idea in his life and expressed it in his teachings; but the Christ of the church doctrine had no historical existence.

The reign in Germany of the pantheistic philosophy, and of the theological schools to which it gave rise, was short. The great systems that attained such dominant influence during the first four decades of the present century fell in quick succession. Hegel's philosophy, which for a time seemed likely to justify its own boast of having attained absolute and final truth, had lost its hold before the century was half over. There was but a short passage to the naturalism of Feuerbach and the materialism of Büchner and Vogt. Strauss ran quickly through all the stages in the downward progress of pantheism, and died, to all intent and purposes, an atheist. The same powerful opponent of historical Christianity, in his second *Life of Christ*, went over to the position of the Tübingen school, greatly modifying, if not throwing overboard, his hypothesis of myths. The Tübingen school itself long ago lost its hold upon the best thought of Germany, even in unbelieving circles. To-day the men of influence in Germany who teach the old pantheism can be counted upon the fingers



of a single hand. Nevertheless, it would be untrue to say that pantheism has ceased to be dangerous to Christianity. As its first blows were dealt in the dark, its covert attacks have had power long after its public reputation has waned. The method it originated has become a formidable instrument in the hands of unbelievers. It has continued to live in the cultivated thought of our age. Its historical criticism survives, now that the use made of it by Strauss and Baur has fallen into desuetude. The influence persists in literature. It has passed over from the Continent to England and America. We can scarcely take up a newspaper or a book without meeting traces of it. The tendency has been popularized by the writings of Carlyle in England and Emerson in our own country. The pantheistic assault is not yet defeated. It is still powerful, and, if the signs of the times are to be trusted, it is likely to be pushed at no very distant period with renewed strength.

But the pantheistic attack upon Christianity is not the only one which this century has witnessed. Another, in some respects quite as formidable, influence is to be taken into account in our consideration of the changes which have brought about the present state of apologetics. I refer to the great scientific movement, which had been growing in importance from the beginning of the century, but attained its full power through the impetus received from the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, and the consequent general acceptance by scientific men of the theory of organic evolution. It is indeed true that there is no necessary conflict between any scientific discoveries and the doctrines of religion and Christianity, and that



the most instructed and candid scientific men have from the beginning recognized the fact. The first effect, however, of the wonderful advances made in the physical sciences was to produce the impression that the foundations not only of revealed religion, but also of theism itself, were undermined. Unquestionably very many of the most prominent men of science believe this to be the case, while popular unbelief was convinced that it had become possessed of new and invincible weapons. To those who can look back over the whole of the last twenty-five or thirty years, the survey is one full of interest. The eager and triumphant dogmatism of the men who thought they had now accomplished the downfall of Christianity, and the trembling and confused defence of those who ought to have been its unshaken and confident champions, were significant features of the time. The wonder is that Christianity passed through the shock with so little detriment.

I spoke of the dogmatism of the scientific opponents of Christianity, but it would be wrong to leave the impression that I consider it all dogmatism. The scientific assault has been very different from the pantheistic. The latter was bitter, arrogant, unscrupulous; the former has been characterized for the most part by a humbler and more earnest spirit. The genuine man of science is, first of all, a seeker of truth. He has not so much a point to make as a world to discover. On the whole, the scientific attack on Christianity has been honest and open. In fact, in many cases it has been not so much an attack as a desertion. The new discoveries seemed to make a God needless, and so to dispense with the first condition of revealed religion.



Darwin himself, as we learned from his *Memoirs*, was at first friendly to the Christian system; but as his wonderful theory more and more took possession of his thought, his belief in God became evanescent and his religious faculty atrophied.<sup>8</sup> The devotees of physical science become so intent upon the one sphere of reality with which their investigations are concerned, that they first ignore, then forget, the existence of the spiritual sphere, whence the distance is short to the denial of it altogether. Men thus become mentally and spiritually myopic with respect to the highest range of truth and it disappears from their vision. Many of the scientific men whose utterances have done most to shake the confidence of the masses in Christianity, have not been unkindly disposed toward religion; rather they would have retained it, had they believed they could honestly do so.

But the very fact that there has been so much of earnestness in the scientific unbelief of our time, has given power to the assault upon Christianity. It has misled the masses and confused them as to the merits of the controversy. Moreover, the unwisdom which in many instances has marred the defence of Christians, has produced an unfavorable impression. I doubt whether we who have lived in the noise and dust of the fight, realize how tremendous at times has been the onslaught of our adversaries.

Thus far I have spoken only of the scientific opposition. But, as is always the case, such an opposition formulates a philosophy for itself. One would naturally look for materialism as the philosophical accompaniment of such a movement of scientific unbelief, and doubtless the thought of our times has had a de-



cidedly materialistic tendency. It is not materialism, however, but agnosticism which has been the prevalent philosophy among our unbelieving men of science. It is curious that those features of Kant's idealism, which Dean Mansel,<sup>9</sup> following in the footsteps of Sir William Hamilton,<sup>10</sup> wrought over into a system having for its avowed purpose the defence of revealed religion and theism, should have been turned against the very foundations of religion itself. But such is the fact. We cannot but admire the shrewdness and ingenuity with which Herbert Spencer<sup>11</sup> performed his task of furnishing scientific unbelief with a philosophical basis. He was shrewd enough to perceive that thinking men will not permanently rest satisfied with the materialistic explanation of things, but must have some kind of a metaphysics; he was ingenious enough to borrow his system from orthodoxy, to put it into such a shape as to satisfy the demand for a metaphysics, and so to bound the field of thought as practically to give full sway to a scientific method which takes no account of things higher than matter, force, and motion.

Spencer's system, however, great as has been the influence which it has exerted, has been from the first inconsistent with itself. It combines incongruous elements, and its advocates are in a state of unstable equilibrium, doomed sooner or later to gravitate toward materialism or to rise into some form of theism. Nevertheless, for the time being, agnosticism has proved a powerful auxiliary to unbelieving science in the conflict with religion and Christianity. It has long prevented the reaction, which would have come much sooner if the scientific opposition had taken the form of bare materialism. It has been merged in many



instances with the pantheistic influence, to which it stands in close relation.

The scientific assault has been directed chiefly against the theistic foundations of Christianity. But Christianity itself has been directly involved in the struggle. Christianity has stood for theism. It has not been arrayed against deism, as in the earlier conflicts, nor has it entered into an alliance with deism to defend the common theistic truth. Rather it has stood as the great type and exemplar of theistic religion. The idea of a natural religion, standing midway between Christianity and unbelief, has ceased to satisfy men's minds. The issue is, Christianity or a non-theistic explanation of the universe. In practical matters, touching human morals and spiritual needs, the issue is, Christianity or secularism.

It is easy to see that the enormous changes which have taken place in the nature and method of the assault upon Christianity have rendered the old evidences insufficient, and, for present purposes, to a great extent worthless. They were directed against deism, not against pantheism and agnosticism. The apologetics of the school of Butler and Paley served its day and generation, but it fails, except in a very limited sense, to serve ours. Deism, it is true, continues to exist as a tendency of popular thought, especially among uneducated people. But its practical influence to-day is very small. Few are so ignorant as not to know something of the later theories of unbelief and methods of attack upon Christianity. It is no longer possible to accredit the Christian revelation in bulk by the miracles, and to prove the miracles by a mere "trial of the witnesses." Apologetics is confronted by a much more



serious and difficult situation. The proof of the authenticity and credibility of the scriptural books has become a complicated, delicate, and arduous task, testing all the resources of literary criticism. The centre of the historical evidence is shifted from the miracles to the person of Christ. The contents of the Christian revelation, instead of being the thing to be proved, have become an element in the proof. The ethnic religions can no longer be passed by with contempt, but their relation to Christianity and the distinguishing features of the latter as the religion of redemption through Christ must be made clear. It does not meet the demand of the time to prove the truth of Christianity as a mere system of doctrine; what men need most to know is that it is the living, present, perennial power of God, by which he is redeeming the sinful world.

The result has been that a new system of evidences has sprung up, supplanting the old, which did such good service in its day, and adapted to the needs of our own age. This system differs from its predecessor not only in the fact that it is directed against modern forms of unbelief, but also in being more scientific and comprehensive. The theological thought of our times has come to realize that a distinction is to be made between apologies of Christianity, which consist in a marshalling of the proofs demanded by particular attacks, and have therefore only a temporary value; and apologetics as a science, which has for its object the complete exhibition of the proof of Christianity, as well as of its principles and methods, and thus its defence against all attacks, from whatsoever quarter they may come. The old evidences, in spite of all the learning and skill expended upon them, were apologies and not scientific



systems of apologetics. From the nature of the case they could not possess a permanent value. It was inevitable that they should fall into disuse as the assault changed its form, with the unfortunate result of throwing suspicion upon the worth of all defences of the Christian faith. What is needed is a positive system of proofs adapted to all times and circumstances, by which we may not only meet attacks but forestall them, and carry the warfare into the enemy's country.

Such a system our modern evangelical theology is endeavoring, with a good degree of success, to furnish. I now ask your attention to a consideration of its more important details.

In the first place, the starting-point of contemporaneous apologetics is furnished by the truer, because more comprehensive and spiritual, conception which prevails of the nature of Christianity. The old evidences were based upon a narrow and inadequate notion of the fact they had to prove. There is often a deeper connection between the orthodox theology and the unbelief of an age than a superficial view would suggest. Not infrequently the defects which are exaggerated in the latter exist in a different form in the former, furnishing at least a partial justification for the heterodox protest. Deism did not have the monopoly of rationalism. There was a strong rationalistic element in the orthodoxy which it attacked. Christianity, according to the prevalent conception of the old theology, is a system of objective truth, a body of doctrines to be apprehended and accepted by the intellect. It is a doctrinal revelation, that is, a divinely communicated, and otherwise inaccessible, system of truth. The inadequacy of the conception was aggravated by the identification of rev-



elation with the Bible, the truth recorded with the record which preserves it.

But our best modern theological thought has reached a more accurate understanding of Christianity. It does indeed include a doctrinal element, but it includes far more than that. Christianity is the whole redemptive activity of God in Christ. It is God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. When, however, we come to scrutinize it more carefully, we discover that its unity is twofold. It may be considered from two quite different points of view—namely, as the redemptive revelation, made to mankind in the past, and completed in the work of Christ and his apostles, and as the actual system of redemptive forces and agencies ever since in operation.

Let us examine each.

By the revelation we mean God's self-communication and self-manifestation to men that he might redeem them from sin. This also subdivides itself, upon closer scrutiny, and we distinguish in it two elements, the facts and the doctrines of redemption, the saving grace and truth.

Let us look first at the facts. We call Christianity a historical revelation, and most truly. It is based upon a series of outward events. In the progress of the revelation God interposed in human history in extraordinary ways, produced changes not to be accounted for by the present order of nature, and introduced new forces into the sphere of human life. Revelation may be regarded as a supernatural evolution, by which a new system of spiritual agencies was brought into the world for the redemption of sinful men. It is thus largely concerned with historical facts, differing indeed



from other facts through the supernatural element everywhere present in them, but incorporated, along with natural events, in the ordinary history of the race.

These facts find their presupposition and explanation in the creation of the world and of man, and in the fall of the latter. No sooner did sin begin to work than God's redemptive grace also began to work and to manifest itself in outward events and changes, that is, historically. The foundations were laid in the dealings of God with the Patriarchs. The separation and education of the Chosen People further advanced the work. The sacrificial system, the theocratic kingship, and especially the prophetic office, were potent agencies in God's hands for carrying on the process of redemption and preparing the way for the great Prophet, Priest, and King, who was to come. The whole history of Israel is a disclosure of redemptive grace.

Then came Jesus Christ, the great redemptive Fact, God manifest in the flesh and present to save. Now the events follow thick and fast, everyone of them vitally important in the Christian system—the incarnation, the birth, the childhood, the early life of the Saviour. Next comes his ministry, with its actual manifestation of redemptive powers in the miracles, the teachings, the example of the God-man. Then follows the sacrificial death upon the cross, the great central fact of Christianity, which has given it the distinctive emblem by which it is known the universe over as the religion of the atonement. The resurrection and the ascension to the heavenly glory next come before us. The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost



marks the beginning of the new epoch, the actual bestowal upon the Redeemer's church of the full possession of the powers of grace. The revelation is completed by the work of the inspired and miraculously endowed disciples of the Master, who by his help laid the foundations of the church.

Here, from first to last, we have a series of historical events, all essential elements in Christianity. They can never be ignored without destroying Christianity itself and reducing it to a lifeless rationalism or a vague and powerless spiritualism.

But there is a second element in Christianity considered as revelation, namely, doctrine. I do not assert that facts and doctrines are actually separated, for since they are integral and connected parts of the same organism of revelation, no sharp line can be drawn between them; yet they are capable of clear logical distinction. The facts are the manifestation of the redemptive grace; the doctrines, of the redemptive truth. In order to redeem men, God had need not only to bestow upon them the power of his grace, but also to make clear the nature of his redemption to their intellects, and thus bring it home to their hearts. Accordingly, the revelation consisted, to a large extent, in the communication of truth to inspired men, who, in their turn, became the teachers of their fellows. Christ, during his ministry, was not only a Saviour by work and example; he was also a teacher, and this element in his work is more prominent than any other. The inspired apostles and their companions were emphatically preachers and teachers.

It is to be noted that the doctrine presupposes the facts. It is chiefly concerned with them. This is true



of both the ethical and the theological elements in the redemptive revelation. The facts tell their own story in part, but only in part. They need a divinely authorized exposition. Their relation to each other and their bearing upon human duty and destiny must be explained. Men need to be taught the way of salvation and the life of holiness. Thus are furnished the materials of Christian ethics and of a part of Christian theology. Then these facts have an invisible background of relation to God and the other world, which can be made known to men only by divine teaching. It is thus that the larger part of the truths composing theology are revealed. The Christian mysteries, as they are called, such as the Trinity, the incarnation, and the atonement, have come first to human knowledge in this way. This, in like manner, is the only source of knowledge respecting the world beyond the grave and the future history of the church and the world.

The doctrinal element in Christianity, like the historical, is essential. Yet we need to be on our guard lest we give it too exclusive prominence. Revelation is not merely the communication of truth. As we have seen, the doctrinal element is only secondary, and would be without significance if the historical element were absent. It has been the mistake of rationalism in all ages to ignore the facts and to reduce the Christian revelation to a mere system of abstract doctrines.

Before I leave this branch of the subject let me say a word about the Bible. The facts and the doctrines together make up the matter of the revelation. The Bible is the record of them. Upon this subject there has been much confusion, which may be avoided by a little clear thinking. The redemptive revelation and



the Bible are not identical. It is true that the Bible may be considered, regarding it as the work of inspired men and prepared under direct divine guidance, as a part of the revelation. It is also true that by a simple and familiar figure of speech we may identify the record with the things recorded, and thus correctly say that the Bible is God's revelation to men. But we have to do here not with popular modes of statement—legitimate enough homiletically—but rather with the question of scientific accuracy. Now, the Bible is not, strictly speaking, the same as the revelation. The revelation, in part at least, existed before the Bible. Its facts and doctrines were communicated orally before God moved the wills of prophets and holy men to commit them to writing. The record is one thing, the facts and doctrines recorded are another and different thing. The title of Chillingworth's famous book, "The Bible the Religion of Protestants," does not state the truth. The Bible is not the religion of Protestants or of any other Christians; it is not revelation; it is not Christianity. It is the inspired record of the facts and doctrines of the Christian revelation. As such it is of priceless value to the church and to mankind. It brings before us who live in the latter days the original revelation in all its primitive freshness, and thus is able, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to make us wise unto salvation.

But the redemptive revelation is only one element in Christianity. There is another of equal, and, in some ways of looking at it, even of greater importance. Christianity is not merely a revelation finished centuries ago and possessed by us through written records. It is a system of redemptive agencies now at work in the



world, in the church, and in the heart and life of every Christian. The redemptive revelation was God's means of introducing into the world redemptive powers, which he brought in to stay, and which he has been administering during all the Christian ages through the agency of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The kingly office of Christ and the work of the Spirit make Christianity a living reality to-day.

The Saviour, who liveth and was dead, and is alive forevermore, sits upon the throne of the universe and makes it his great work to save the world from sin. His ministry on earth, his atoning death, his rising from the dead and ascension into heaven, laid the foundation for the work he is doing to-day. His Spirit is everywhere active, making known the truth of the Gospel, convincing of sin, converting, bearing witness to the Father's forgiveness and grace, sanctifying, capacitating for service in the kingdom, bringing into the blessedness of heaven. He is ordering the events in national and personal life for the advancement of the kingdom and the building up of the church. The kingdom of God is in the midst of us. This is Christianity by way of eminence, this system of spiritual agencies proceeding from Christ, and the effects they are producing in the world. Christianity belongs not only to the past, but also to the present. Its realities—the reconciled Father, the glorified Christ, the omnipresent Spirit, the invisible kingdom of God, the new heart, the sanctified life, the consecrated activities of the individual and the church—are the essential facts of the spiritual world.

Now these two elements of Christianity, the revelation and the present redemptive power, are organically united. Neither would be of use without the other.



The historical, the doctrinal or rational, and the redemptive factors are all parts of one system. Yet, as was intimated a moment ago, there is a true sense in which the last is the most important. The others are essential as foundations of the life; this is the very life itself. It is useless to preach the Christianity of eighteen centuries ago, if we ignore the Christianity of to-day.

Upon this broad and comprehensive conception of Christianity is based the system of apologetics. The evidences correspond to the elements of Christianity as they have just been stated. There is here, if I may use the expression, a "natural system" of proofs. We have seen that the different factors of Christianity are organically connected. In like manner there is an organism of proof, with mutually related and subordinated members. Modern logic has shown that proof is not a matter of haphazard. Every present reality is proved through its manifestations. Every fact of past history is proved, partly by its relation to present facts, and partly by the effects it has left behind, which last may be, and generally are, embalmed in human testimony. Truths are proved by their relation to facts present and past, and by their connection with other truths. Every present reality, historical fact and truth, has its own system of proofs, which it is the business of the defender of it to discover and set forth in their completeness. He may do this satisfactorily or only partially, scientifically or quite at random; he may present only the evidence required by some present emergency. But still the full proof is there, and the skilled reasoner will find it and use it, setting forth all its elements and marshalling them in their logical connection.

The evidences of Christianity thus exist in their cor-



respondence with the different factors of Christianity, independently of the success or lack of success of the Christian apologist. To our modern apologetics belongs the credit of having to a great extent discovered the system and of bringing it to scientific expression. It has transformed itself from a mere defensive art into a positive science. It proves the truth and reality of Christianity by a rational justification of all its elements.

The evidences fall into three groups, answering to the elements of Christianity already considered.

At the head stand the historical evidences. These include all the proofs for the reality of the facts which constitute so large a part of the redemptive revelation. Inasmuch as the Bible is the chief, and in many cases the sole, record of these facts, the argument is largely concerned with questions respecting the authenticity, genuineness, credibility, and inspiration of the documents through which we are made acquainted with the history of the redemptive revelation, both in its preliminary Old-Testament stage and in its culmination in Jesus Christ and the founding of the Christian church. Here belong the questions of biblical criticism. Under the same head are treated the evidences from prophecy and miracles.

The historical evidence passes over, with no sharply drawn line of separation, into the rational, which has to do with Christianity as a system of truth. On the border stands the proof from the person of Christ, which is indeed a great historical fact, but derives its significance from the truth he reveals to men in his life and redemptive work. He is, as the apostle John declared, "full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). The



evidence for the truth of Christianity derived from his wondrous personality and life, an evidence which has had more power during the Christian ages than any other except that of personal experience, is at once historical and rational. Here also belong the proofs derived from the need of revelation, from the intrinsic excellence of the Christian system, from the relation of Christianity to philosophy, and from its superiority to other religions.

Finally, we have the evidence of the reality of Christianity as a working-power in the world. This may be called the practical evidence. It may be viewed under two aspects.

This redemptive power of Christ manifests itself outwardly in the world, the church, and the individual. First, we have a historical form of the practical evidence, derived from what Christianity has done during the Christian ages in lifting men out of sin into purity of life, in reforming the abuses of human society and government, in advancing morality and civilization. Here we find a place for the argument from the increase in numbers, influence, and spiritual power, of the Christian church. Next comes the argument from the present influence of Christianity. Lastly, the outward evidence of the power of Christ in the changed lives and holy conversation of believers to-day is the great practical proof which works upon men with convincing effect.

But the practical proof has still another form, namely, that which is to be the especial subject of these lectures, the evidence of Christian experience. This is derived from the manifestation to the believer himself, in his own inward spiritual life, of the presence



and power of God and the Christian realities. It is the evidence that is based upon the Christian's regeneration and sanctification.

While the evidences of to-day are characterized by the larger and truer view of Christianity and the more scientific and comprehensive exhibition of the proofs of which I have spoken, there is one argument that is being brought into especial prominence, partly through the more general recognition that this place belongs to it of right, and partly because the exigencies of the non-Christian attack increasingly demand its employment. The evidence upon which the Christian believer relies, in the ultimate resort, for the confirmation of his own faith, must be the chief argument for the truth of Christianity even for those who are not yet Christians. The assaults of pantheistic and agnostic, as well as of materialistic unbelief are directed chiefly against the claim of Christianity to be the redeeming power of God in the world to-day, and must be met by the proof which the individual believer and the church have in their own experience that the Gospel is indeed the power of God into salvation. The evidence of Christian experience is thus being brought to the front.

In accepting the situation and laying especial stress upon this central proof, evangelical theology is only returning to its own. The early<sup>12</sup> and the mediæval<sup>13</sup> church made little, if any, apologetical use of the experimental evidence. But in the Protestant Reformation it became, and for more than a century continued to be, in the form of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*, the chief proof for the truth of the Christian system.<sup>14</sup> It is thus presented by Calvin in his *Institutes*.<sup>15</sup> Its paramount importance is asserted in most of



the Protestant confessions of faith, and finds typical expression in that of Westminster.<sup>16</sup> During the seventeenth century it occupies a well-recognized place in the Puritan theology of Great Britain and the Lutheran theology of the Continent. The somewhat narrow form in which the proof appears in the doctrine of the internal witness of the Spirit is enlarged to the full proportion of the experimental evidence in the writings of Richard Baxter, the great Puritan divine, who not without reason has the reputation of being the father of English apologetics.<sup>17</sup> During the prevalence of deism it does indeed fall into the background, but we still find it treated with great fulness by men like Owen<sup>18</sup> and Watts.<sup>19</sup> One of the first effects of the great revivals of evangelical religion by which the spiritual torpor of the deistic period was overcome, was the renewed recognition of the force of this argument by our great American theologian Jonathan Edwards.<sup>20</sup>

In the traditional system of apologetics, however, as it was shaped by Butler and Paley, the evidence of Christian experience finds no place. I do not mean that it was wholly ignored. Men like Chalmers, while not incorporating it into their system, have asserted its unique importance for the confirmation of Christian faith.<sup>21</sup> It has been urged with more or less of emphasis by such writers as Coleridge,<sup>22</sup> Bishop Wilson of Calcutta,<sup>23</sup> and in our own country President Hopkins<sup>24</sup> and Dr. Charles Hodge.<sup>25</sup> Still, for the most part, it has been neglected, and it has been only comparatively recently that it has come once more into prominence. This latter result has been due not only to the attacks upon Christianity of which I have spoken, and the positive growth of theological science among us, but also very



largely to influences proceeding from the evangelical theology of Germany. In that country the evidence of Christian experience has been more and more fully recognized since the efforts of Schleiermacher and his followers turned the tide of rationalism.<sup>26</sup> Among recent German theologians it has received especial attention from Dorner<sup>27</sup> and Frank.<sup>28</sup>

I do not think it would be too much to say that the recognition of this form of evidence is the essential and striking feature of the evidences of to-day. To make good this assertion, I shall not be able to refer you to the text-books of apologetics. With but few exceptions they still ignore it. But this need not surprise us. A reconstruction in the methods of theology, as in those of the other sciences, finds systematic expression only somewhat late, after the materials have long been gathered and tested. The makers of text-books are usually behind all other classes of scientific men. There is a literal, as well as a figurative, stereotyping which, in our country at least, interferes with the progress of thought in literature. But there are other regions to which we can look more confidently for the signs of the times. In the current periodical literature of our day, in the preaching of our ministers, and to a considerable extent in the lecture-rooms of our teachers of theology, the experimental proof is being estimated at its true value.

My task in these lectures, which have for their object the exposition of this argument, will therefore be the grateful one of acting in a humble way as the interpreter of the best thought of our age in this department of theological investigation.

In bringing the subject before you, let me remind



you of the distinction already made between the science of apologetics and the apology of Christianity. The former has to do with the methods and principles by which the truth of Christianity may be proved; the latter with the actual proof of Christianity itself in opposition to the attacks made upon it. The present course of lectures will be not so much an apology as an essay in apologetics. I shall indeed endeavor to present the proof, both in general and in its details, as well as to meet the objections that may be brought against it. But my chief object will be, so to bring it before you that you may be able to use it practically in your ministerial work. If the result shall also be to strengthen your own faith, I shall rejoice; and I cannot but hope that this will be the case. But this will be incidental. I take it for granted that you are already in practical possession of this most important proof. My aim will be to point out its scientific value and to help you to avail yourselves of it in the great and good work to which you have devoted your lives.

It remains only to point out briefly the ground we are to traverse in the remaining lectures. In dealing with our subject it is my purpose to show how the argument from Christian experience presupposes the great principles of that theistic philosophy which grows out of the common religious and moral experience of men. Next I shall try to describe the genesis and growth of the evidence of Christian experience. This will open the way for the scientific or philosophical verification of this experience—in other words, its justification as truth. After that I propose to take up the objections to the proof, as urged by both the opponents and the friends of Christianity, and to endeavor to give them full and



candid treatment. Finally, I wish to show the relation of the experimental to the other kinds of evidence, and thus to make clear its leading place in the organized system of the Christian proofs.

I believe profoundly, and with undoubting conviction, in the importance of the subject. I trust that the result of these lectures will be to confirm you in the same belief.



## LECTURE II.

### PHILOSOPHICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS—THEISTIC.

IN order properly to develop the evidence of Christian experience, it is needful that we should carefully define our philosophical position. Every science presupposes some theory of the universe and its Ground; and the same may be said of every scientific proof. The first step in any scientific presentation of facts cannot be taken without the help of such a theory.

Now there is a definite philosophy underlying the proof of Christian experience and forming its necessary presupposition. It is best designated as the *theistic philosophy*. It stands opposed to those other philosophical systems which bear the names of deism, pantheism, agnosticism, and materialism. Except upon the basis of it, it is hopeless for us to attempt to advance a single step.

This theistic philosophy is, in a true sense, Christian. That is, it has been wrought out by Christian men on Christian ground under the light of the Christian revelation. But this fact does not impair its value when employed as an auxiliary in the evidence of Christianity, or lay us fairly open to the charge of reasoning in a circle. Like all philosophy, it has to do with matters of universal validity, which can be verified by all men. It is not confined to the facts of Christian experience, but deals with the universal religious experience.



A man does not have to be a Christian, in order to understand and confirm it. It is simply the philosophy of religion as developed under the clarifying influence of Christianity.

The importance of a clear statement of this philosophy is perceived when we consider the fact that the experience of the Christian is not an isolated phenomenon, but directly and intimately connected with the general religious experience of mankind. It is because men have the latter that they are able, when they enter into the distinctively Christian experience, to know it as divine. The evidence of the reality and divinity of Christianity is therefore dependent upon the reality and divinity of the common religious experience. Unless there is a natural revelation, and a natural consciousness of God based upon it, it is useless for us to attempt a scientific proof of the truth of the Christian consciousness. But the proof of the reality of the universal religious experience is furnished by the theistic philosophy of religion.

I know there are those who take a different view, and insist that the evidences of Christianity are independent of the evidences of natural religion. And this much I would without hesitation concede to them—that the Christian, in his personal experience of God's redeeming grace through Christ, as manifested in the new birth and the Christian life, possesses the certainty of all the facts and truths involved in the general religious experience. I would also grant that his knowledge of these facts and truths is much higher and more adequate than would be possible apart from Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of these concessions, I do not believe that the higher knowledge and



fuller experience of the Christian would have been possible, had he not passed through the lower stage. The skilled man of science, with his microscope and other instruments of investigation, and his technical knowledge, sees in the objects with which he is engaged not only all that the common man sees, but vastly more, and sees it far more adequately and truly. But his technical knowledge would never have been attained, and could not now be maintained, if he did not possess the common knowledge of ordinary men, which is at once the presupposition and necessary condition of his particular scientific accomplishments. So here—the distinctively Christian knowledge would be impossible without the general religious knowledge. Just as in theology the first and second creations are vitally correlated, so in apologetics. Christianity does not discard nature but corrects it. It is, as Baxter says, “medicinal to nature.”<sup>2</sup> It does not give men new powers, but enables them rightly to use their old ones.

The importance, therefore, of the subject now before us cannot be too highly estimated. Here is the great battle-field upon which we must fight through the conflict with the unbelief of our times. If we permit an unbelieving philosophy to dictate to us the interpretation to be put upon the facts of religion, we shall be left helpless in our defence of Christianity. We have reason to be thankful that the theistic philosophy has already won so many victories and compelled unbelief to so many concessions.

In the present lecture we shall examine the philosophical presuppositions of the evidence of Christian experience, so far as they relate to the nature of religion, the true conception of God and the proofs for his



existence.<sup>3</sup> In the next we shall consider the anthropological presuppositions which the theistic philosophy furnishes.

I. We start with the subject of religion.

The old definition, which we inherited from the rationalism of the last century, corresponds to the rationalistic conception of Christianity described in the previous lecture. Religion was defined as the mode of knowing and worshipping God.<sup>4</sup> At first the full meaning of the definition is not evident. It is disclosed when we discover, what is abundantly evinced by the writings of both unbelievers and Christians of the rationalistic school, that the knowledge intended is not the practical or experimental spiritual knowledge of God, but an intellectual apprehension of the true doctrine concerning God, while the worship is that of outward forms and rites rather than the personal spiritual relation of communion essential to the true conception of religion. The doctrinal tenets, the moral codes, the particular *cultus* connected with the various religious systems, are regarded as constituting religion itself.

But the theistic philosophy of religion discards this definition as wholly inadequate. The constituents of religion which are here made central and essential belong in reality merely to the circumference of the fact itself. We must look deeper if we will grasp the real essence of religion. What is the common element in all the religions of mankind, from the most degraded to the highest, from animism to Christianity, which differences the religious sphere from every other department of human experience? What is the essential fact that gives religious faith its distinctive character? Not the system of dogmas, not the moral code, not the peculiar



cult ; but the personal relation of God to the religious man and of the religious man to God.<sup>5</sup> Religion has been truly defined as “ the union of man with God, of the finite with the Infinite.” <sup>6</sup> It involves, on the one side, a reaching-down and self-manifestation of God to men—the presence, power, and grace of the living God, who is not far from every one of his children, the God in whom we live and move and have our being. On the other side, it involves some vague recognition, at the very least, on the part of man, some presentiment of the Supernatural, some sense of dependence upon him, and some trust in him. On the human side the knowledge may be of the most imperfect and even perverted kind, but there is always the certainty of a Power higher than ourselves, on whom we are dependent, and to whom we owe obedience. Faith is the recognition of this fact and the correspondent action of the will. Christianity discloses to us the true nature of the divine side in this relation, but it does not for the first time reveal the relation itself ; this is universal, and in some sense universally known.

Various theories have been advanced as to the origin of religion. The rationalistic orthodoxy has explained it through the hypothesis of a primitive revelation, which in the case of the heathen has become corrupt ; or has joined with deism in accepting the theory of innate religious ideas. Unbelief has had its other theories besides the one just mentioned. The old explanation, that religion was a human invention, originating in priestcraft and the policy of kings, has yielded to finer, if not more satisfactory, views. The same may be said of the theory—as old as the days of classic heathenism, but revived in the last century by Hume, and in our



own by D. F. Strauss—that fear is the cause of religion, *primus in orbe deos fecit timor*. The hypothesis which has received most favor in the present generation, on account of its ready combination with the scientific doctrine of evolution, is animism. According to Tylor,<sup>7</sup> who has developed this view in his *Primitive Culture*, men are led to the belief in a soul that is independent of the body by the phenomena of dreams, of death, and of certain morbid states. The idea thus originated they transfer to other forms of existence—plants, animals, and even lifeless things. Thus they are led to infer the existence of higher spirits, which become objects of worship. According to Herbert Spencer,<sup>8</sup> who closely agrees with Tylor as to the origin of the idea of the soul, religion has its source in the worship of ancestral spirits.

But all these theories are inadequate and artificial. The simple, and only satisfactory, explanation of the origin of religion is identical with the explanation of its maintenance and present existence. The actual presence of God, and his influence upon a spirit made for communion with himself account for religion in all its stages. God reveals himself to men and communicates himself to them in all ages, in all nations, and under all conditions. The defect and perversion of the human soul may dull the vision of God and make it possible for men to fall into the grossest errors respecting him. But all have some knowledge of God and find their souls going out to the Divine in some response to his revelation. God himself is the cause of the beginning, the progress, and the present power of religion.

In what has been said the universality of religion has been implied. The modern science of religion has



disproved, one after another, the alleged facts formerly adduced to prove that there are tribes of men without religion, until scarcely any are left, and the majority even of unbelieving scholars, in this department of investigation, now concede that all men in their natural state are conscious of some relation to a supernatural Being or Beings.<sup>9</sup> But the Christian theist has no especial zeal upon this point. All that he insists is that men actually stand in the relation to God which constitutes religion. He fully admits the power of sin to blind men to the fact of this relation, as he admits the power of a false philosophy to make them put a false interpretation upon the facts. The exceptions rather prove than disprove the rule. They show that in some cases men ignore the facts; but in no sense do they throw suspicion upon the facts themselves.

The systematic study of the religions of mankind, in their history and present condition, has thrown a vast amount of light upon the relation to each other of the different faiths of mankind, and also upon their relation to Christianity. This department of investigation is the child of our own century, and it has transformed the earlier conceptions of the subject. During the days of rationalism deists and orthodox Christians had at the bottom the same principle and differed only in their application of it. The deists maintained that both the ethnic religions and Christianity, so far as they go beyond the precepts of natural religion, were the fraudulent invention of priests and rulers. The orthodox denied that this is the true explanation of Christianity, but agreed in substance with the deists in their judgment of the heathen systems, differing only in explaining the truth in them as the remnant of



an original instruction given to mankind through a primitive revelation. The heathen systems were usually ranged under the common and indiscriminate designation of the "false religions." Little allowance was made for the direct influence of God upon the vast masses of mankind lying outside of Christendom. At most a merely general providence over them was conceded.

But we have come to a better and truer view. We find that the religions of the world form part of one great system, with common characteristics and well-marked relations to each other. Great as are the errors and abuses which inhere in the ethnic faiths, the careful study of them shows that they contain an immense amount of moral and spiritual truth. Even Christianity—though radically differenced from them by its provision for redemption through Christ, which is its essential characteristic—is vitally correlated with them. The thoughtful Christian sees in these "religions growing wild," as Schelling called them, not mere human constructions, but the human perversion of an essential and indefeasible relation between God and man; while he recognizes in their history the presence of God's providence educating the human race—to use the helpful conception with which Lessing's famous work<sup>10</sup> has supplied us—for its high destiny in the kingdom of God. Christianity is at once the remedy of all that is false in the ethnic religions and the fulfilment of all that is true in them. Through all the discords produced by human sin and error runs a divine harmony, which is the prophecy of the final song of redemption through Christ.<sup>11</sup>

In coming to this truer view of the nature of religion, the theistic philosophy has learned some lessons



from the pantheistic and agnostic, and even from the materialistic, philosophies. They have helped it to correct some of the errors of the earlier rationalism. But though they have taught it much, there is far more in them that it repudiates. It denies that the religious relation can exist between an unconscious, impersonal Ground of the universe and the human spirit. It utters its uncompromising protest against the naturalistic explanations of religion. It insists upon its own doctrine of the personal presence of God in the world and the human soul as the true and only way of accounting for the facts.

II. This brings us to the teachings of the theistic philosophy respecting God and the proof it gives of his existence.

The inadequacy of the old natural theology has been implied in what has been said upon the subject of religion in general. As the rationalistic age bequeathed to our century an imperfect definition of religion, so it bequeathed a defective view of the nature of God. It is the view which nowadays is popularly ascribed to the deists alone, but which was, as a matter of fact, common to them and their orthodox opponents. The philosophy of religion was the common ground upon which the deistical and the Christian theologians met, and it is not strange that the lower view prevailed, and the foundations of orthodoxy were the concessions of deism. Reason demands that a God should be postulated to account for the existence of the world. But the efficiency and the activity of this Creator were confined to the beginning of things. The finished world was thought competent to operate by the intrinsic power of its laws and forces. A formal rather than a full and



heartly recognition was all that was accorded to the divine providence. Berkeley<sup>12</sup> and Edwards<sup>13</sup> stand almost alone among English-speaking philosophers and theologians in the first half of the last century in the assertion of the continual presence of a living God through whose unintermitting energy the world is maintained in existence.

It is characteristic of this rationalistic tendency that it practically reduces God to a mere notion of the intellect; indeed, this is the peculiarity of rationalism generally, that it substitutes intellectual abstractions for realities. According to one view, the idea of God is innate, the result of a constitutional instinct or preformation of man's being, through the power of which the idea in due time emerges into consciousness. Of course it cannot thus be conceived as the result of the immediate influence of God upon the soul; on the contrary, it is purely a product of the intellect, standing in no direct relation to the reality of things. When Descartes<sup>14</sup> taught that the innate idea of God has God for its cause, he did not mean that God creates it in man by his momentarily energizing, but that it is caused by his original shaping of the human constitution. According to another view, of which Locke,<sup>15</sup> the great opponent of innate ideas, is the most prominent representative, the idea of God is a necessary inference from the existence of the world and of man. But this view agrees with that just mentioned, though in other respects so opposed to it, in regarding God as a notion of the intellect rather than as a living Fact.

The traditional evidences for the divine existence manifest the same deistical tendency. The *à priori*



argument starts from the idea of God and endeavors to make good its objective validity. But where the idea is regarded as a *mere* idea, an abstraction, the passage from its subjective existence to the objective reality, from idea to fact, cannot but be questionable. Kant's polemic may here be urged with unanswerable force. The existence of the idea cannot guarantee the existence of the thing, so long as we find in the mind itself the sufficient cause and explanation of the idea. Moreover, since the idea has been commonly represented as having for its contents the full theistic conception of God, and yet as universal and necessary, the argument is contradicted by the palpable fact that the great majority of the race have no such conception of God. The *à posteriori* arguments are presented with more success, but labor under similar defects. The cosmological proof is urged to show that the universe must have had a First Cause. But this First Cause is represented as first in point of time, not as the ever-active Ground and present Governor of all things. It is the *Primum Movens*, postulated to account for the winding up of the clock that ever since has been going through the energy of its own mainspring. The same may be said of the psychological argument, so strikingly set forth by Locke,<sup>16</sup> based upon the necessity of assuming an intelligent Cause for intelligent beings; it is the cause of their first existence rather than of their present existence. The teleological argument at first seems to promise more, especially where—inconsistently with the ordinary form of the cosmological proof—it is combined with the doctrine of special creations. This is the most thoroughly popular evidence and in its typical



traditional form, as shown in Paley's *Natural Theology*<sup>17</sup> and the *Bridgewater Treatises*,<sup>18</sup> it attained the highest perfection. But this argument, in the old form, is at the bottom as deistical as the others, and we have lived to see it fall into general disrepute under the influence of the scientific theory of evolution, with its all-comprehensive explanation of the special forms of the universe. There remains the moral proof, commonly presented in the form of an argument from conscience. But inasmuch as conscience has been regarded at the highest as a constitutional instinct, pointing, like the other instincts, to the agency of God in the original creation of man, rather than as a witness to the continual presence of the holy God, this argument has not sufficed to deliver us from the vicious circle of deism.

Thus the old theistic argument succeeded only in making good the deistical position. The favorite names of God employed by the old theologians betray the point of view from which they prevailingly regarded him. They called him the "great First Cause," the "Creator," the "Supreme Being," the "Deity." In their thought he was a God afar off, and not near at hand; a God who did a mighty work ages ago, and is now resting from his labors.

It is now time to look at the higher and truer view of God to which our age has come. In attempting to delineate it, let me not seem to assert that this view is in every sense new. It has always been held implicitly by thinking Christians, and has been the spring and motive of their religious life. But it is one thing to maintain a view tacitly and implicitly, and quite another to hold it as an avowed philosophical and theo-



logical opinion. Progress in philosophy and theology largely consists in making the implicit explicit, in bringing out into the sunshine of clear thought the ideas which hitherto have been comparatively in the shade, even though they may always have influenced our actions.

The influences which have been instrumental in effecting this salutary change in the philosophy of religion are, in the main, the same as those that brought about the revolution in apologetics mentioned in the last lecture. It was inevitable that the poverty of Locke's sensationalism should manifest itself and lead to a reaction, as, indeed, was the case even in the last century, when the Scotch philosophy raised its protest against the prevailing doctrines. There can be no question also that the revival of evangelical religion had a most important effect by turning men's thoughts to the revelation of God's presence and living power in the experience of the religious life. Scarcely less powerful has been the influence of pantheism and agnosticism, which have made the deistic position untenable, and, while utterly antagonistic to the theistic philosophy in their essential features, have taught it many of those useful lessons lawfully to be learned even from an enemy.<sup>19</sup> Nor is it to be forgotten that physical science has furnished philosophy with better methods and truer tests.<sup>20</sup>

Under the guidance of these influences the philosophy of religion has reached, in our age, a far truer and more satisfactory conception of God than that of the old orthodoxy or the deistic view with which it is so closely allied. It rejects the narrowness and error of the old view, and it is also guarded against the no less



narrow and erroneous views of the modern pantheistic, agnostic, and materialistic systems, each of which emphasizes a single aspect of truth so exclusively as to run it into radical error.

What the true conception is, has been already in part implied. The God of theism is—to use the noble and never-to-be-forgotten definition of the Assembly's Catechism—"a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." But he is this, not as a mere notion of the understanding, but as the Reality of realities, the Fact of facts. He is the personal God, self-conscious, self-determining, like ourselves in all the elements which constitute personality, wholly distinct from his creatures, and independent of them, whether those creatures be personal, merely sentient, or material. He is the self-moved Deviser and Creator of all things. He alone is eternal, and the universe, his workmanship, has its origin with and in time. His preserving activity and providential government are those of a personal Ruler who stands above and separate from the world. The transcendence and personality of God, which constitute the elements of truth in deism, we jealously maintain in the face of all pantheistic and agnostic denials.

But God, according to the theistic conception, is not only transcendent; he is also immanent. Nature and man have their own substantial being, but they have it only through their dependence upon God. They are realities, but only through their subordination to him who, in the supreme and unique sense, is *the* Reality.

The machine of nature does its work through the constant influx and activity of the divine energy. The



physical forces are only second causes, through which the First Cause—alone cause in the full sense of the term—operates. God is the hidden but ever-active Ground of vegetable and animal life. The world is but the veil through which may be seen, shaded, but unconcealed, the lineaments of God. It is the hieroglyphic in which his character may be read.

God is the source of physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual life in man. He is the constant, clear-shining Light of the human reason. The enormous superiority of the human to the brute intellect is due to this participation in the activity of the supreme Reason.<sup>21</sup> The human will in its freedom, which is a true cause as the forces of nature are not, is this only in virtue of its abiding dependence upon the divine Will. Through conscience this holy Will, moment by moment, proclaims the eternal law of right, and lays obligation upon the soul of man. In his frown is punishment; in his favor is life. He makes the soul the temple of his indwelling. In the experience of the religious life the personal God meets us as persons, and the human spirit enjoys communion with the infinite Spirit in whose image it was created.

In all this relation of God to men there is a constant self-manifestation and self-communication on his part. We call it truly revelation. The distinction between the natural and the supernatural, or Christian, revelations is an old one. The theistic philosophy of religion in its best modern form has wisely revived this distinction, and clearing the term natural revelation of its deistical associations, applies it to the relation in which God stands to all his children. It expresses, as no other term can do, the abiding presence, self-disclosure,



and self-bestowing love of the Infinite. It brings the philosophy of religion into line with the teachings of the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans (i. 19, 20), when he says, speaking of the heathen: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity."<sup>22</sup>

But what of the proofs of this conception of God? How shall we know that the facts which religion postulates have reality and objective validity?

It is here that the advance in the views and methods of the philosophy of religion is most marked. The old notion of an innate idea of God no longer holds water. The deistic proof of a *Primum Movens* has become inadequate. The modern scientific spirit calls for a proof which shall satisfy the requirements of the scientific method, and the modern philosophy of religion does not fear to give it. It boldly takes its stand upon the facts of a universal religious experience, and undertakes the task of proving that this experience can be explained only upon the assumption that it is what it purports to be, namely, a reality, involving the actual existence and present power of God.

The process of verification carries us back to the elements of all experience, and to the problem of knowledge. What are the constants in the ever-varying current of human consciousness? How are these constants to be interpreted? What are the elements which the mind itself furnishes to knowledge? What elements have an objective origin?

The most fruitful modern discussions of the subject



date from the time of Kant.<sup>23</sup> Let us take our starting-point from him. It is well to do so, for he gives the best and fullest refutation of the old deism, while we find in him the essential elements of both idealistic pantheism and agnosticism, so that the analysis and correction of his doctrine afford the best refutation of these philosophies. The aim of the great philosopher of Königsberg was to analyze experience and distinguish its *à priori* factors from the *à posteriori*. The raw material of experience consists of sensations which come to the mind from without. But the mind is not passive in the process of knowledge; it not only receives but gives, and the knowledge is the result of the synthesis of both factors, the subjective and the objective. Of the subjective Kant distinguishes the intuitions of time and space; the categories of the understanding, quantity, quality, relation, modality, with their subdivisions; and the three ideas of reason—the soul, the world, and God.

Within the framework of these *à priori* forms the raw material of sensation appears in the guise of rational and ordered experience or knowledge. But the forms themselves are purely subjective; they have no objective validity. There is a "thing in itself" (*Ding an sich*), which is the objective cause of sensation, but we do not and cannot know what it is. By our mental constitution we are obliged to think of it under the *à priori* forms, but we have no right to assume that the reality exists under these forms. They are a necessity of thought, but this fact does not vouch for their objective existence. As the mirrored sides of the kaleidoscope determine the ordered and beautiful figures assumed by the colored bits of glass, the mind determines



the forms assumed in experience by the thing in itself; with the exception that in the latter case we must assume no knowledge of the bits of glass except as the unknown substratum of the images which appear. Thus we are shut close within the limits of experience, knowing that there is a region beyond, but doomed to be forever ignorant of its nature. Kant himself describes in striking language the narrow sphere of knowledge. After completing his investigation of the understanding, he says: "We have now not only traversed the country of the pure understanding and carefully examined every part thereof, but we have also surveyed it and assigned to everything its place upon it. But this country is an island, and shut up by nature itself within unchangeable barriers. It is the country of truth (a charming name!), surrounded by a broad and stormy ocean, the proper place of illusion, where many a fog-bank and many a deliquescent iceberg give the false promise of new countries, and while they ceaselessly deceive the mariners ambitious of discoveries with empty hopes, they involve them in adventures which can never be abandoned and yet never concluded." <sup>24</sup>

The three ideas of reason stand at an even further remove from reality than the categories of the understanding and the intuitions of sense. Their necessity of thought is no guarantee for their objective truth. Their place in thought is only regulative and not constitutive. Their value lies in the fact that they enable us to unify our knowledge and reduce it to order and system. We cannot indeed refrain from attributing to them in our thought a substantial and objective existence. But this is—to use Kant's own illus-



tration—a “natural illusion” like that which makes us see the objects reflected in a mirror as though they were in the space behind it. The affirmers and the deniers of the existence of the soul, the world, and God, are alike mistaken. They are like combatants who fence with their own shadows. Their sharpest thrusts are in vain, for there is nothing to wound. They may fight ever so bravely, but the shadows which they cut to pieces instantly come together again, like the heroes in Walhalla, and the bloodless battle goes on indefinitely.<sup>25</sup> With caustic wit the great agnostic characterizes his own philosophy and the attempts of his fellow-philosophers to soar into the transcendent region of metaphysics: “We have found that, although we had purposed to build for ourselves a tower which should reach to heaven, the supply of materials sufficed merely for a habitation which was spacious enough for all terrestrial purposes, and high enough to enable us to survey the level plain of experience, but that the bold undertaking designed necessarily failed for want of materials—not to mention the confusion of tongues, which gave rise to endless disputes among the laborers on the plan of the edifice, and at last scattered them over all the world, each to erect a separate building for himself, according to his own plans and his own inclinations.”<sup>26</sup>

In consistency with his theory, Kant repudiates the traditional arguments for the existence of God. The ontological, with its inference from the idea of the most perfect Being to his reality, is based upon the delusion that the ideas of reason represent the objective truth of things. The cosmological and teleological arguments presuppose the ontological, and of themselves do not carry us beyond the charmed circle of finite experience.



Only at one point does Kant endeavor to break through to an objective Reality which can afford the basis for religious truth. It is in the sphere of man's moral nature. The truth which the pure reason cannot attain, is to be accepted as the postulate of the practical reason. The latter bases its procedure upon the assumption of the reality of three great facts—God, freedom, and immortality. That Kant by the acceptance of these facts as postulates of the practical reason, meant to vouch for their absolute reality and thus to retract the assertions he makes in dealing with the pure reason, cannot be truthfully affirmed. His aim was to find a working basis for morals and religion rather than to give them a speculative grounding. Let men live and act as if God, freedom, and immortality were realities; for the rest, let them recognize their limitations. A modern philosopher has said, "You cannot find a verification of the idea of God or duty; you can only make it."<sup>27</sup> A far greater than he declared, "If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine" (John vii. 17). Probably Kant would not have agreed altogether with either; his view was that these ideas must always remain unverified. If he was inconsistent, it was a noble inconsistency, which raises his agnosticism far above the modern imitations of it.

But in truth Kant was not altogether inconsistent. He was one of those great thinkers who stand between two ages, summing up the one and inaugurating the other. His philosophy was two-sided and capable of two interpretations. It is like the drawing of a gem which we may see at will in relief or depressed, as a *cameo* or an *intaglio*. Looking at it in one way, we find in it only the old rationalism stated in its logical



consequences. For years philosophers and theologians had been teaching, to all intents and purposes, that God is a mere notion of the intellect, and yet insisting that in the sphere of morals and religion men should act as if this notion were a reality. Kant said it out distinctly and explicitly. But there is another way of looking at his philosophy. Plainly to state the logical implications of the old rationalism was to furnish its *reductio ad absurdum*. The circle had been traversed to the opposite pole. The consequences of the old rationalism were the foundations of the new idealism. If the mind is the author of the idea of God, as well as of the ideas of the world and of self, and if the thing in itself is but the unknown substratum of experience, why not take one step more, and turning the thing in itself into a notion, make all subjective? Or if such a subjective idealism prove unsatisfactory, why not deify the notion and find in an absolute Idea the Ground and Reality of all things?

Kant's position was, as the name he gave his philosophy implies, critical. But criticism does not give us truth; it only prepares the way for it. The cry of the philosophers in our age is "Back to Kant!" But the reason for returning to him is, not that we may adopt his system, framing some kind of "Neo-Kantianism," but that we may correct the defects and extravagances of the earlier and later systems by his criticism. The value of his philosophy does not lie in the solution he gave—or attempted to give—to the problem of knowledge, but in his clear statement of the problem, which makes it possible to secure its solution by the application of a better method. From the first there has been one fatal defect in Kant's philosophy; it cut the bond



between subjective and objective knowledge. By its assertion that the forms and ideas of the mind, though necessary to thought, have no corresponding external reality, it opened the way on the one hand for the return to the scepticism of Hume, which reappears, though in a somewhat different dress, in our modern agnosticism; and on the other, for the advance to idealistic pantheism.

It is not my purpose at this time to show how the critical philosophy of Kant developed into the systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, each representing a phase of truth, but all essentially pantheistic. I wish only to call attention to the fact that Kant, when his fundamental error is corrected, gives us the key to the true solution of the problem of knowledge. The principle which, consistently applied, remedies the defect of the Kantian philosophy is, that what is necessary to thought has objective, as well as subjective, validity. Or, to state the same principle in familiar words, that the forms of thought are the forms of things. The contributions which thought makes to knowledge correspond to the reality of things. To suppose that there is a yawning and impassable gulf between the mind and the objective world is suicidal. Nothing can possess a higher validity than that which is a necessity of thought. If this fails us, then all fails us, and thought itself crumbles into ruins. It is indeed true that we know things in their relation to ourselves, and do not know them apart from this relation; but this fact, instead of invalidating our knowledge, is the sole condition of it. We must know things under the limitations of our faculties, and therefore we know them only partially; but there is no reason to believe that we



know them otherwise than truly. There is everything to confirm the conviction of the unsophisticated mind, that the subjective and the objective are parts of the same system, organically related and mutually correspondent. We must perceive things in time and space, and this is evidence to us that time and space are real relations existing in and between things. We must know our sensations in the framework of the categories, and this is proof that the categories are the law of the things which give rise to the sensations.

So with regard to the ideas of reason, with which we are here particularly concerned; they are necessary to thought, and therefore we conclude that they are true, that is, that they correspond to the objective reality. Self, the world, and God, are not mere subjective forms, but objective facts; and we know that this is the case, because the ideas are universal and necessary to thought. If such necessities of thought deceive us, we have no criterion of truth, but fall a prey to universal scepticism. Instead of supposing, with Kant, a vague spectral "thing in itself," which the mind is obliged to think of as existing, though ignorant of its nature, while the ideas of reason, God, the world and self, are merely mental forms with no corresponding objective reality—instead of such an unsatisfactory assumption, we find in God, the world, and self, the real nature of the "thing in itself," the grounds and causes of our mental phenomena.

But let us look more carefully at these three realities guaranteed to us by the reason. How are the existence and necessary force of these ideas to be explained? When we analyze consciousness, we find that God, the world, and self, are necessary data of it. The larger



portion of the contents of consciousness, if we pass by the mere forms of thought and look at its materials, is accidental or contingent; we can conceive it as non-existent; it comes and goes. But the three facts of which I have been speaking remain constant, immutable, and irremovable, defying all attempts to dislodge them or think them away. They are the fixed stars in our firmament of thought. How shall we explain the fact? How shall we verify our certainty of the corresponding objective reality? The answer is simple: these factors of consciousness are necessary to thought, because in all our conscious experience we come into contact with the realities to which they correspond and which are the cause of the ideas. We have constant experimental knowledge of self, the world, and God. It is the constant shining light of their manifestation which gives to the ideas their necessity.

The self reveals itself through all the conscious activities of the mind, in its thinking, willing, and feeling. Descartes founded his philosophy upon the inexpugnable certainty of our own existence—“*Cogito, ergo sum.*”<sup>28</sup> Locke declared that we have the knowledge of our own existence by “intuition.”<sup>29</sup> The highest test of knowledge in the common mind is to be as sure of a thing as we are of our own existence. Consciousness becomes self-consciousness when we clearly distinguish the subject from the object, the self from the not-self, and realize in all our mental ongoings the presence and manifestation of the single, indivisible *ego*, the personality, of which we predicate all the mind’s acts. Our knowledge is an experimental knowledge. Indeed, just in this consists the self-consciousness of man, which differences him from the brute, which has mere con-



sciousness without self-consciousness. At first the infant does not distinguish itself from the not-self. To it subject and object are mingled in one undifferentiated complex. Then, as the process of development goes on, the two begin to be distinguished and the *ego* rises above the horizon of consciousness.

“The baby, new to earth and sky,  
What time his tender palm is pressed  
Against the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that ‘this is I:’

“But as he grows he gathers much,  
And learns the use of ‘I’ and ‘me,’  
And finds ‘I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch:’

“So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may begin,  
As through the frame that binds him in  
His isolation grows defined.”<sup>30</sup>

Self-consciousness dawns when he has experience of himself and stands forth a person, when as subject he knows himself as object, and brings together subject and object into unity. I know myself, and know that I am myself; and this means that I know myself as revealed in my thoughts, and feelings, and volitions, and know that I am the subject thus revealed.

In a similar way we know the world—not indeed with the same immediateness with which we know ourselves, but none the less truly—through the effects it produces in our consciousness. The thing in itself is known through the phenomena, which do not hide it, but, on the contrary, reveal it. We do not, it is true, ever get behind the phenomena and behold the naked



cause in its independence. The thought of doing so involves the absurdity of supposing we could know things apart from our faculty of knowledge; for the phenomenon is the thing in itself as we know it. The faculty of knowledge would commit suicide if it attempted to violate its own law. But there is not the slightest reason for calling in question the accuracy of its results. The several classes of sensations are each a revelation of the nature of the world in its material and physical attributes. The laws, relations, order, and beauty which we discover in them are a revelation of the ideal side of the world to our reason. Our belief in the accuracy of our knowledge of the world is not invalidated by the facts brought to light by physical science touching the difference between the causes affecting the end-organs of sense and the result in consciousness. It is true that sight is totally different from the cause of sight, namely, the vibrations of the æther, and sound from the movements of the atmosphere which give rise to it. But these differences have to do, not with the passage from phenomena to their cause, but with the interpretation of one class of phenomena in terms of another. The man of science does not get behind knowledge when he discovers that the cause of the sensation of heat is the motion of the particles of a material substance; this motion and these particles are just as much sensations as the heat itself, and the knowledge of the one is just as certain (and just as uncertain) as the knowledge of the other. The notion that the subjectivity of knowledge is proved in this way is so preposterous that one wonders it could be entertained for a moment by any thoughtful mind.

In this connection we may speak of our knowledge



of our fellow-men, which stands midway between our knowledge of ourselves and our knowledge of the world, and is dependent upon both. Certain sensations belonging to the spheres of sight, hearing, and touch, are hieroglyphics from which we read off, in the light of our self-knowledge, the manifestation to ourselves of other self-conscious spirits.

We are thus prepared to understand our knowledge of God. We know him through his self-revelations. It is an experimental knowledge. That which may be known of God is manifest in us; for God manifests it to us.

This brings us to the arguments for the divine existence. If they have been discredited in the old deistic form, it has been only that they might be urged with new power and clearness in the new and better form. We know God through his manifestations of himself. Accordingly, each form of his self-revelation furnishes us with a proof of his existence. If I would prove the existence of the world to one whose mind has been disturbed by the philosophy of the subjective idealist, my best method will be to bring before him each of the ways in which the world manifests itself to our sense and reason, and to show him that the facts can be explained only upon one assumption, namely, that there is a world. Through each of these channels the world enters my experience and reveals itself to me. So, to prove the divine existence, I must present the different methods of God's manifestation and show that they can be explained only upon the assumption that God exists.

Let it be borne in mind that the proof is not of the kind that proceeds from step to step of a train of



reasoning. Such argumentation belongs to notions rather than to facts. Here lay the error of the old rationalism, signalized by the declaration of Locke, that we know the existence of God by demonstration. As Rückert says,

“ Wer Gott nicht fühlt in sich und allen Lebenskreisen,  
Dem werdet ihr Ihn nicht beweisen mit Beweisen.”

God is from the first present in my experience, and my proof is simply an analysis of my experience and a verification of it.

Let us look at the arguments.

The first is the ontological. It has had its full share of abuse, but it has persisted in spite of it. Let it be rightly stated, and every true theologian and philosopher must accept it. The idea of the Absolute is a necessity of thought, and therefore a revelation of the existence of the Absolute—that is the simple argument; not the idea of God with its full theistic contents, but the idea of the Absolute—the formal idea, which tells us *that* there is an infinite Being, but does not tell us *what* that Being is. We are so constituted that we must think of something as eternal, unchangeable, superior to all limitations of space, capable of existing out of relation to all other beings and though no other beings should exist; in a word, some self-existent Being. This much even the agnostic admits, as he admits also the force of the cosmological argument. Herbert Spencer says: “ Though the Absolute cannot in any manner or degree be known in the strict sense of knowing, yet we find that its positive existence is a necessary datum of consciousness; that so long as consciousness continues we cannot for an instant rid it of this da-



tum ; and that thus the belief which this datum constitutes has a higher warrant than any other whatever.”<sup>31</sup> To doubt the force and objective validity of this idea would be to doubt everything. This “intellectual point of which we cannot get rid, but which we continue to think in the very attempt to think away,”<sup>32</sup> cannot be without a corresponding reality. Professor Flint does not overstate the truth when he declares, “If, although I am constrained to conclude that there is an infinite and eternal Being, I may reject the conclusion on the supposition that reason is untrustworthy, I am clearly bound in self-consistency to set aside the testimony of my senses also by the assumption that they are habitually delusive.”<sup>33</sup> The only explanation of the necessary idea of the Absolute is the actual existence of the Absolute. It is God himself who has set eternity in our heart (Eccles. iii. 11). Reason falls into ruins if this fundamental idea is discredited. This form of thought, which “has a higher warrant than any other whatever,” must reveal to us the basal form of Reality.

Next comes the cosmological argument. God reveals himself through the material and physical world, as its First Cause, Ground, Life, and Governor. In presenting this proof, we do not leave the ontological behind us, but presuppose its presence and force. None of the arguments for the divine existence are to be taken separately ; together they form an organism of evidence. But undoubtedly the cosmological argument furnishes its own independent quota of proof. There is no evading the principle of causality ; it is necessary to thought and must be a law to things. And yet there are no true causes in the world ; it is the region of effects ; its apparent causes, when closely scrutinized, all



become effects. We must look deeper for our cause ; and in our search we come to God. Only the Absolute can be the cause we seek. In every second cause the First Cause makes its presence known to us. Kant asserts that causality is a category of the understanding and applies only to phenomena. Is not the fact just the converse ? Is it not rather, in the truest and strictest sense, a category of the reason and applicable in the completeness of the idea only to the noumenon, the thing in itself, that is, to the Absolute ? Kant repeatedly repudiates his own principles and attributes causation to the thing in itself. The English agnostics speak without hesitation of the " Absolute Cause."

Perhaps we may even go further in our use of the cosmological argument, and infer something as to the nature of God besides mere causation. Our primitive knowledge of cause comes from ourselves. In our conscious and free activities we set ourselves to change and new-mould ourselves and the *non-ego*. We do this through our wills. We think of the changes in the material world as due to causes because we know ourselves as causes. But, as we have seen, material causes are only effects. The natural sequences reveal no true cause when we look at them in themselves. The world cannot be its own cause. If, then, will is the only true cause of which we have knowledge, is it too much to infer that the true cause of all things is an infinite Will ?

The teleological argument is based upon the divine self-revelation in the ideal side of the world. The universe is not mere brute matter and energy ; it is instinct with reason. As we find in it a transcript of our own reason, so we are brought into contact with an absolute Reason. The order, harmony, and beauty of the



world, the laws which govern the activities of matter and energy, the mathematical relations existing between things, are all manifestations, not only of a creative Reason which presided at the beginning of things, but also of a Wisdom constantly energizing in the world. It is an ordered unity, a universe, a cosmos, and not a chaos. As we look upon it, material things and physical forces seem almost to shrivel and disappear in the presence of omnipresent and universally active thought. The material is but the diaphanous veil that reveals rather than hides the divine Reason. Just as we know the thought of our fellow-men, whose spirits are perceived by no direct intuition, through the forms and motions of material things, which are signs to us of the movement of the invisible intellect, and convey its message to us ; so we know the thought of God through the material things which he has made and is constantly disposing according to his will. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

The argument from evidences of design is but a subordinate form of this great argument from manifested Reason. The natural history of the world is the unfolding of a divine plan. If the theory of evolution be true—as it seems likely that it is, at least in its great outlines—then in the long procession of inorganic and living forms, from the primitive atoms to the beginnings of life, and from the protozoon to man, we have an evidence of a superintending Wisdom so amazing that human thought reels when it contemplates it, and the old design argument, which confined itself to the presentation of isolated instances of adaptation in nature, becomes a tallow candle in the presence of the



sun. Then when we look at human history, seeing its long, steady progress, the unceasing march upward, the direction to a far-off moral goal, the wonder heightens and we hide our faces before the glory of the all-wise God.

God's self-revelation in the constitution and operations of the human soul gives us the psychological argument. What is man? What is this self-conscious, self-determining personality, this thinking, feeling, willing essence? Can it be the creation of nature? No, for it is the lord of nature. Yet it is not eternal and self-existent; it has had a beginning, though it has a presentiment that it will have no end. If Reason alone will account for reason in nature, *à fortiori* Reason alone will account for human reason, the soul of man. Personality, freedom, conscience, love, intellect—these are themselves almost divine, and they are the pledge that there is a Being truly divine, from whom they spring. Natural religion teaches the doctrine of the divine image in man, and the redemptive revelation does no more in this respect than confirm its truth.

Nor must we stop short with the inference from the constitution of the human soul to its divine Creator; there is in us a present revelation of the living God. Our reason is not an independent power; there is a true sense—though not the pantheistic—in which we must declare it to be a function of a higher Reason. God is the Light of all our intellectual, moral, and spiritual seeing. Our rational intuitions, upon the condition of which alone rational thought is possible, are dependent upon the constant presence and energizing of the divine Reason.

Our moral nature and the operations of conscience are



a still higher revelation of God, and furnish us with what is called the moral argument. We are free, able to choose our ends, yet under obligation, owing allegiance to law, which bids us choose not as we please but as is right. This is to be moral beings, and this is the proof that our Creator is a moral being, free yet under obligation, not to some power outside of himself but to his own holy nature. Moreover, conscience is the ever-present and ever-active witness to the sanctity of the moral law; not itself the voice of God, but the channel through which the voice of God comes to us. Conscience is the revelation of a holy Will, a righteous Person laying his claims upon us and demanding our obedience. The utilitarian theory of morals, alike in its old form which explains our moral nature as the result of education and its later evolutionary form which accounts for it through inherited habit, utterly fails to furnish a satisfactory explanation of the sanctity of duty and the authority it carries with it.

The moral argument is commonly stated in another form also, in which the teleological proof is combined with the moral. The active presence of the moral law in the world is evidenced by the constitution of society, its institutions and customs, the course of human history, and the progress of the race. The "Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness" is the holy God.

And so the moral argument merges into the religious, which is really not a different proof but another aspect of the same. In the religious life God reveals himself as a Person, holding fellowship with us as persons. In the recesses of a quiet spirit the Divine and the human meet in blessed communion. Here is



the sanctuary where the experience of God is consummated and the proof of his existence attains its strongest and most convincing form. Of the reality of such communion every soul knows something. I should not except even the avowed atheist, for I doubt not that God enters even into his soul, though he may put a false construction upon the facts. When I see the atheist himself trying to find some substitute for the theist's God, that he may worship it—some ideal, some abstraction of humanity, some personification of nature or reason, I know the meaning; the God he will not recognize is there, and in his inmost heart he knows it.<sup>34</sup>

We are thus brought back to the point from which we started, the higher view of God's nature and relation to the world and man which has been brought to light by the modern philosophy of religion. In a word, it is the view of a God personal and transcendent, yet always and everywhere present and active, a God who is constantly revealing himself through his works and to his intelligent creatures, a God with whom we are in constant contact in our experience. It is the true theistic conception of God, guarded on both sides, against the errors of deism and the errors of pantheism, agnosticism, and materialism.

In this experience of God every soul of man has a part. He is not far from every one of us; in him we live and move and have our being. It is possible for every soul, however degraded, however ignorant and humble, to feel after him and find him (Acts xvii. 27, 28). I do not claim that all men have an adequate knowledge of him. The account that has been given of him in this lecture is that which is attained by the philosophy of religion in its highest exercise under



the full light and influence of Christianity. Under the power of sin the souls of men have been darkened. All have access to the facts that have been presented here, but the vast majority of men are quite incapable of putting our interpretation upon them. From the height which we are privileged to reach the scale stretches down through every grade of knowledge to the lowest forms of heathenism. Yet the knowledge of God is common knowledge. However imperfectly and pervertedly men may hold it and express it, all have it, so that when the higher Christian truth comes to a soul, it does not come to one ignorant of God, but to one that from its earliest days has felt his presence and power.



### LECTURE III.

#### PHILOSOPHICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS—ANTHROPOLOGICAL.

THERE is a philosophy of man which is essentially connected with the theistic philosophy of God. Like the latter, it forms a necessary presupposition of the evidence of Christian experience. Here also we have reason to rejoice that the best thought of our age has reached such true and satisfactory results.

The rationalistic movement of the last century began with the exaltation of man. Its watchword was human reason. Man was made the measure of all things. It was claimed that the human intellect is capable of solving, through its own resources, all the problems of the universe, and of sitting in judgment upon all professed revelations. The age never tired of singing the praises of man, of his nobility, his god-likeness, his high destination. As the dignity of the human intellect was exalted, so that of the human will. The tendency was to make light of sin and to magnify the power of man to work out his own salvation. But this view of man contained the seeds of its own destruction. As the deistic rationalism, when it worked itself out to its logical consequences, retired God from the universe, so it lowered man to the level of nature. This is the tendency we see in the philosophy of Locke, which was pre-eminently the philosophy of rationalism—a tendency, it is true, that is still strug-



gling with the higher view, but not without suggestive intimations of the principles that were to find full expression, on the one hand, in the materialism of the Frenchmen Condillac, Helvetius, Diderot, and D'Holbach, and, on the other hand, in the scepticism of Hume. In all probability Locke, in spite of his polemic against innate ideas, was not a sensationalist pure and simple, but the whole drift of his system was in the direction of a thorough-going application of the maxim: "*Nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuerit in sensu.*" The introduction to his famous *Essay concerning Human Understanding* begins with the words: "Since it is the understanding that sets man above the rest of sensible beings, and gives him all the advantage and dominion which he has over them, it is certainly a subject even for its nobleness, worth our labor to enquire into."<sup>1</sup> Yet it cannot be denied that at most of the points where the great philosopher had the opportunity to show the superiority of man, not only in degree but in kind, to the lower orders of being, he failed to do so. It is characteristic of the whole trend of his thought that he suggests the possibility of the materiality of the soul and denies man's natural immortality.<sup>2</sup>

The seeds, whose sowing is so evident in the days of the deistic rationalism, have attained abundant fruitage in our modern materialism and agnosticism. In our own day we have seen these systems directing their powerful enginery of philosophical principles against every view of man which would make him different in kind from the brute. Moreover, even Christian thought has been largely leavened by the rationalistic view of man. This was especially the case during the earlier



part of the present century, when the influence of Locke was still predominant in philosophy.

The reaction in favor of the truer and higher view of man, which has come at length, has been due in part to the influences mentioned in the previous lectures as contributing to the better method in apologetics and the truer conception of God's nature and relation to the world and men. But only in part. Though pantheism has done something to counteract the materialistic view of man, it has failed to furnish us with any satisfactory substitute for it. Physical science has, to far too great an extent, given aid and comfort to those who would obliterate the distinction between man and nature. Agnosticism is in no essential respect different in its doctrine of man from the old materialistic sensationalism. Infidelity in its later forms joins hands with the old deism in uncompromising opposition to the theistic doctrine of man—a doctrine rightly called theistic, since we meet it nowhere except in connection with the theistic conception of God.

In the present lecture let us look somewhat closely at the elements of this doctrine of man which form the anthropological postulates of the evidence of Christian experience.

I. The theistic philosophy of man asserts that he is a being allied in his nature and capacities to God. In order to classify him aright, we must place him in the same category with the great Being revealed to us through nature as the Creator, Ruler, and End of nature. Man is spirit. He bears in his being the image of God. He is in finiteness what God is in infinitude. As it is true that we can know God only through man, it is equally true that we can know man only



through God. The ideas of God and man are correlative. As every true conception of God must be in a sense anthropomorphic, so every true conception of man must be in a sense theomorphic. And as man is a being made like God, so he is a being made for God. His final cause is found not in nature or in himself, but in his Maker. He is capable of communion with God. He is bound to God by the moral law and conscience. Thus, though he is finite, yet through his connection with God he has an infinite value; and even philosophy, apart from special revelation, gives us intimations that though he has his origin and earthly existence in time, he may participate in the divine eternity.

The philosophy of theism, therefore, asserts the intrinsic and absolute superiority of man to nature. Man is, indeed, in a true sense, a part of nature, if in nature we include all created and finite beings. The poverty and partial ambiguity of our language embarrass us here. In common usage the term nature has not the same breadth when used in antithesis to man as when opposed to the Supernatural. I doubt whether anything is gained by the attempt to establish a single consistent use of the word. Man is in nature, so far as he is a created and finite being, and forms a part of the sensible order of things; he is above nature, so far as he possesses qualities denied to all other created beings connected with the sensible order of things. Yet he is not supernatural in the common meaning of that word—that is, he is neither divine nor disconnected from the sensible order of things.’

Man is also a part of nature in the sense that he is implicated with nature through his bodily organism,



and that the world of nature is the theatre of his activities.

But the distinctive part of man, that which gives him his peculiar quality as human, is wholly different from anything which nature in the lower meaning of the term can show. The difference is not merely one of degree, it is one of kind. The human spirit, with its godlike nature and powers, is a form of existence absolutely diverse from anything else in the world. When it appears in the history of our globe, it is as something entirely new and unique. The chasm between the highest animal and the lowest man is to-day, as it always has been, impassable.

The non-theistic philosophies of our times take their stand in determined and violent resistance to every such view of man. From the nature of the case they cannot do otherwise. Denying, as they do, the existence of a personal God, they are compelled to deny the existence of a man made in his image, and for communion with him. This is especially the case with materialism and agnosticism. The one asserts that the ultimate cause of all things is matter and energy; the other, that it is the unknown Power behind phenomena, with which philosophy has nothing to do beyond the assertion of its existence. Both are compelled to explain man in terms of matter, force, and motion. In other words, he is a purely natural product, and a purely natural being, whose superiority to the animal consists only in degree.

The strength of the present attack upon what I have called the theistic conception of man, is largely due to the scientific basis which materialism and agnosticism claim to derive from the theory of evolution, a claim



which is, unfortunately, widely conceded to them by the unthinking. Of the value of the conception of evolution in science and philosophy, as well as in theology, it is needless for me to speak; it is the possession of the theist quite as much as of his opponents. Nor is it needful at this late day for the theologian to turn aside to concede with cheerful alacrity the great importance and probable truth—within such limits as science itself prescribes to all its working hypotheses—of that scientific theory which now commonly bears the name of evolution, the Darwinian doctrine of the derivation of species by descent through the operation of natural selection and its kindred laws. This doctrine has proved its value by the immense impulse it has given to science and the light it has thrown upon extensive ranges of facts not previously understood. But the evolution taught by the materialistic and agnostic philosophies—as in the so-called evolutionary philosophy of Herbert Spencer—is in no sense scientific, and cannot be too sharply distinguished from the scientific theory in its legitimate use. It is a mere philosophical speculation, which starts from the assumption of the actual or practical exclusion of God as the First Cause of the universe, and attempts to explain all things through natural causes.

This is true of the subject immediately before us. The attempt to give a purely natural explanation of man rests upon philosophical rather than scientific assumptions. It is indeed true that Darwin gave the impulse to this view in his work on the *Descent of Man*,<sup>4</sup> and that such eminent men of science as Huxley<sup>5</sup> and Romanes<sup>6</sup> have followed in his path. It is also true that they have brought forward a vast number of



facts which go to show, what the theist is not in the slightest degree interested to deny, that man on his material or animal side is correlated with the orders below him, and may in this way be connected with them by descent. That our material organisms to-day are derived directly from the vegetable and animal worlds, through the food we eat, goes without saying. We are not concerned to deny that they may, for aught we know, ages ago have been derived less directly from the vegetable and animal worlds through descent. But that is not the point. We object only to the illegitimate use of the theory of evolution, and we claim that it is so used when it is asserted to be a sufficient explanation of the higher nature of man. If the verdict of the scientific man is needed, we confront the one discoverer of the principle of natural selection with the other, Darwin with Wallace.<sup>7</sup> But it is not a matter of science. Not a particle of scientific proof has been adduced to show that man in his distinctive characteristics is derived from the animal. It is not a matter that can be settled by an appeal to the comparative sizes of human and brute craniums, or the comparative weight of their contents. It cannot be settled by showing in the brute instincts and intelligence the rudiments of the mental powers of man. To exhibit in the calls and cries of animals the beginnings of language does not help the matter. All these facts lie in the sphere common to the animal and man. But when it comes to his distinctive qualities, his self-conscious personality, his reason, with its intuition of universal principles and its power of unifying knowledge, and transforming the dead mechanical world into a living thought-world, his freedom of will, his moral nature, his relig-



ious nature, with its capacity of knowing and loving God—when it comes to these, the scientific theory of evolution by descent has no light at all to throw upon the subject.<sup>8</sup> Here is a sphere entirely different from those below. Here is a new spiritual cause and agent who demands a new and altogether different explanation.

The claim, then, made by the philosophies of which we have been speaking, to possess a scientific basis in the theory of evolution is without justification. The real ground of their doctrine of man is to be found, as has been already intimated, in their assumptions respecting the ultimate cause of the universe.<sup>9</sup>

The pantheistic doctrine of man is undoubtedly superior in important respects to that of the agnostics and the materialists. At first sight it seems even to go beyond theism in its assertion of man's worth. It not only makes him godlike, but actually declares him to be divine. He is the finite revelation of the Infinite. In him the Absolute realizes its true being. But when we come to examine this view more closely we are disappointed. The error in the conception of God utterly vitiates the doctrine of man. It is all very well to declare that man is divine, but such declarations lose their value when we discover what is meant by divinity. Here is not a personal God who creates man in his own image and enters into spiritual communion with him, but an impersonal and unconscious Being that attains consciousness and personality only in man. Man is made divine, but it is by reducing the divine to an impersonal Substance or Thought. And even this poor dignity is not left to man. He is not the only expression of the divine, but merely the highest stage in that process of evolution by which the Absolute realizes it-



self in finiteness, differing from the brute only in degree and not in kind. God is levelled down to nature, and man is but a part of nature. It seems, indeed, a great gain when we pass from the brute matter and energy of the materialist, and the dreary Unknown of the agnostic, to the universal Reason of the idealistic pantheist. But sooner or later we discover that we have been deceived. The reason is not what we supposed. It turns out to be a mere abstraction, a phantom without reality, and man is left a part of nature, distinguished from the lower orders by no essential characteristics.<sup>10</sup>

The theistic philosophy of man repudiates these false views of false philosophies and asserts the unique position of its subject as a child of God, raised by his distinctive qualities far above nature. Let us look now at some of the details of this doctrine.

II. The philosophy for which I am pleading maintains the true personality of man. We have touched upon this subject in the previous lecture, where it was shown that the idea of self is one of the three fundamental ideas of the human mind which have the highest validity, and where the rise and nature of self-consciousness are briefly described. A person is a self-conscious, self-determining being. Personality is the simple but ineffable quality in which the human *ego* or subject consists. It is the postulate of all thought, in the true sense of the term, and of all moral and religious exercises. It gives to man that unity in virtue of which he is an individual being. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it is the type and pledge of all unity as realized by human thought; it is because we know ourselves to be one that we can bring the scattered phenomena of sense and spirit into unity. Personal iden-



tity is the precondition of memory. The absolute unity of the *ego* furnishes the metaphysical argument for the immortality of the soul, which natural theology in all ages has loved to develop.

That unconquerable difference between man and the brute, which the theistic philosophy so strongly asserts, appears nowhere more evidently than here. The animal, like the man, is an individual, but his individuality is not personal. It is conscious, but not self-conscious. It has memory, but not that kind of memory which is woven into such wonderful unity by the personal identity of man. The state of the animal is like that of the child before self-consciousness has developed—with the difference that in the former self-consciousness does not exist even germinally. If we look at the history of the globe, the point where self-consciousness first appears is marked off by a sharp line from all that precedes and is followed by an entirely new class of facts, of which previously there is but the dim prophecy. And now man stands alone in nature in the possession of this wonderful selfhood, utterly distinguished from all the creatures about him.

How much is involved in that little pronoun I by which we designate our self-conscious personality! “A very short word,” says Charles Kingsley, “for in our language there is but one letter in it. A very common word; for we are using it all day long when we are awake, and even at night in our dreams; and yet a very wonderful word, for though we know well whom it means, yet what it means we do not know, and cannot understand, no, nor can the wisest philosopher who ever lived; and a most important word too; for we cannot get rid of it, we cannot help thinking it, cannot



help saying it all our life long from childhood to the grave. After death, too, we shall probably be saying that word to ourselves, each of us, for ever and ever. If the whole universe—sun, moon, and stars—and all that we ever thought of, or can think of, were destroyed and became nothing, that word would probably be left; and we should be left alone with it; and on what we meant by that little word would depend our everlasting happiness or misery.”<sup>11</sup> The language is not too strong to express the fact.

The denial of personality is involved in the position of the non-theistic philosophies. We have seen that they obliterate the difference between man and the animal. In order to do so—or as a consequence of doing so—they would prove man impersonal. This is the case, without hesitation or equivocation, in all materialistic philosophizing. The boundaries between the physical and the psychical are broken down, and mental phenomena are explained entirely through the reactions of the brain upon the impressions received through the nerves and the end-organs of sense. The only unity allowed is that of the bodily organism. The belief in the existence of an *ego* or mind is scouted as a delusion. Agnosticism goes through the forms of burning incense on the altar of the Unknowable by the admission that what is called the *ego* has an inscrutable reality; but, this pious duty performed, it hurries on to overtake the materialists in the practical denial of personality. The sceptic Hume had said, “What we call a mind is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with a perfect simplicity and identity.”<sup>12</sup> In similar language his



modern follower, the agnostic Spencer, declares that the mind is "composed of feelings and the relation between feelings, and the aptitudes of feelings for entering into relations," and in his discussions of the subject of free-will speaks of "the illusion" which "consists in supposing that at each moment the *ego* is something more than the aggregate of feelings and ideas, actual and nascent, which then exists."<sup>13</sup>

The pantheist also, while admitting in words the personality of man, so defines it as practically to abandon what is essential to the fact. Nor can he in consistency do otherwise. The personality of God and that of man are inseparably connected. He who denies the one must deny the other. If God is impersonal, or possesses only a *quasi* personality, it is vain to look in man for any true selfhood. So the pantheist has no choice in the matter. His system lays compulsion upon him. This is true alike of the thorough-going pantheism of Spinoza and the panlogism of Hegel.<sup>14</sup>

III. Closely connected with the assertion of man's personality, which is fundamental in the theistic philosophy, is the affirmation of his freedom. Our reasoning in the previous lecture assumed this. It is only when we know ourselves as free, and because we know ourselves as such, that we are able to transcend the region of necessity, to which nature, inanimate and animate, belongs, and attain to the knowledge of an infinite spirit, free like ourselves.

What is the true meaning of human freedom? Simply this, that men have the power, which animals do not possess, of rational choice. By rational choice I mean the selection of one out of two or more ends of action, in full view of these ends, understanding them



and their relations to each other and other possible ends, and with full ability to have chosen otherwise. We distinguish this *choice*, wherein the freedom of the will is expressed, from *volition* or the executive power, through which the choice is carried into accomplishment, and which is not free. If we compare man with the animals, we declare that the latter have volitions but no choices in the true sense of the word. The animal is *impelled* by impulses and instincts, acting from behind and not in the light of reason. Man is *attracted* by motives, which are not compulsory but only furnish him with the grounds of action. These motives are before him, alluring him onward. The man indeed feels the pressure of impulses and instincts like the animal, for he too possesses an animal nature; but he is able to bring them into the light of reason, to examine and weigh them, and to set them into relation with higher considerations. It lies in his option whether he will yield to one set of motives or another. There is a true sense in which he makes the motive by throwing his choice into the scale and giving this motive or that the predominance. A man knows what he is about and acts accordingly; a brute only partially knows what it is about and does not choose in any true meaning of the word. What seems a choice in the case of the animal is "Hobson's choice," a choice without alternative, that is, no choice at all.

Man's freedom is expressed in different kinds of choices, varying according to the ends which they adopt. Some are momentary in their efficacy; some are permanent. To the latter class belong the choices of the great ends of life, including the supreme end. These permanent choices constitute character. A permanent



choice from the nature of the case determines a multitude of subordinate choices, and the choice of a supreme end affects all subordinate choices. Freedom persists and is immanent in such choices; they are its highest exercise. They entrench themselves in habit and give the fixed element to human life. It is a mistake to suppose that freedom and certainty are inconsistent with each other in either God or man.

The proof of freedom consists ultimately in the appeal to consciousness. The unsophisticated mind knows itself to be free. This certainty of freedom is involved in all moral judgments and exercises, in the sense of responsibility, in the recognition of law. It finds a warrant in the institutions of human society and the actions of men throughout the ages. If the determinist denies the appeal to consciousness, we do not impugn his honesty, but we show him that he, like every other man, must think and act upon the assumption of freedom, and that he inevitably judges other men by the same rule. We therefore assert that he misinterprets his consciousness. If he attempts to prove his point by the assertion that man is a part of the universe and that the universe is under necessary law, we appeal once more to consciousness to show that man is the great exception, correlated with nature yet different from all other natural beings. If he has recourse to statistics to show that man himself is under necessary law, even in the sphere of conduct—so many murders committed every year, so many suicides, so many thefts, — we show that character, the fixed element in freedom, and the nature-side of man, in which he is not free, are sufficient to account for the facts, while the statistics themselves vary so much as to prove their inadequacy for



the task assigned them. But we always come back to the ultimate proof, the assurance of consciousness that we are free—an assurance that vindicates itself in practical thought and action when men deny it in speculation.

The non-theistic philosophies of our day are deterministic. It could not be otherwise; the logic of their denial of the theistic conception of God requires also the denial of this distinctive element in man. There never has been, and never can be, any cordial recognition of freedom outside of theism. And conversely, the denial of freedom in man means, if it is consistently carried out, the denial of God and religion. It goes without saying that materialism is deterministic. But this is equally true of agnosticism and pantheism. Spencer, in his chapter on the will, in the *Principles of Psychology*, declares that the belief in free-will is an illusion. He says: "To reduce the general question to its simplest form: Psychological changes either conform to law or they do not. If they do not conform to law, this work" (the *Principles of Psychology*), "in common with all works on the subject, is sheer nonsense; no science of Psychology is possible. If they do conform to law, there cannot be any such thing as free-will."<sup>15</sup> Spinoza, in the same way, denies human freedom. The later pantheism does the same; the only freedom it concedes is that which consists in rising out of the life of nature into that of the spirit; it finds no place for freedom in the sense of the power of choice.

The present tendencies of scientific and theological thought render the subject before us peculiarly important. Undoubtedly the cultivated minds of our times gravitate strongly in the direction of determinism, while



they are to a considerable degree supported in this tendency by our traditional theology. Before the time of Jonathan Edwards Christian orthodoxy did not deny human freedom. It did indeed insist with the strongest emphasis that man in his natural unconverted state has no power to attain to salvation ; he cannot convert himself, he cannot in any true sense obey the divine law, he cannot attain the chief end for which he was created. In this sense it was declared that man is unfree. But there was no intention of denying that men possess that power of rational choice which differences them from the brutes. All that was claimed was that through sin this power has become inoperative in one department of man's nature, the spiritual. The distinction was carefully made between the "spiritual things" in which the sinner is disabled, and the sphere of "civil righteousness," including all the departments of his active life in which he is not directly occupied with religion, where he is still free. Thus the principle of human freedom is fully vindicated, though its sphere of action in sinful man is limited. Indeed the old Calvinistic theology did not greatly concern itself with the philosophical question respecting the freedom of the will, but taking freedom for granted, as every unsophisticated mind must do, it was only careful in the practical interests of Christian truth, which demands the absolute supremacy of the divine grace, to repudiate all power on the part of lost sinners to work out their own salvation.<sup>16</sup>

It was an evil day for Christian theology when Jonathan Edwards called to the aid of the doctrines of grace, imperiled, as he thought, by Arminianism, the doctrine of philosophical determinism.<sup>17</sup> I say this,



realizing fully the greatness of the man and the importance of the work he did for theology and practical religion. But I say it deliberately. What Edwards accomplished in staying the flood of rationalistic indifference which was sweeping over America as well as Great Britain cannot be too highly prized. The great revivals which he initiated put a new face on the Christian cause. The renewed currency he gave to the old truths of spiritual religion, and the importance he attached to Christian experience as a real contact of the soul with God and Christ are least of all in a course of lectures like this to be underestimated. The impulse he gave to theological thought, and the mitigation of some of the asperities of the older Calvinism, which we owe to him, have made all succeeding generations his debtors. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, the alliance which he established between theology and a false philosophy was fraught with evil. The damage would have been even greater, had not the real nature of the doctrine in point been partially hidden by the continued use of the old term *freedom*, though in a new sense. Indeed, there was an unintended and largely unconscious insincerity in the language employed, which appeared most notably in the prevalent distinction between natural and moral ability. It was possible to tell men that they were free, when all the freedom conceded to them was the ability to do as they pleased, a freedom amounting to no more than the spontaneity of the brute.

It seems strange that an alliance so dangerous should have commended itself so extensively to the most devoted and intelligent men in our evangelical churches for more than a century. It is useless to try to mini-



nize the doctrine ; it is necessarianism pure and simple. Man is governed by motives, and these are not of his own making. His will is simply a machine which registers the action of the strongest motive. The fact that motives are not material or physical, but spiritual causes, that they are from within and not from without, does not change the matter. The freedom that consists only in doing as we please, not in rational choice between alternatives, both lying in our power, is no freedom. I freely admit that the fact that the ultimate Cause, to which the complicated lines of motives and influences may all be traced back, is the Christian God, prevents Edwards's doctrine from being immediately irreligious in its tendency. But the true outcome of this philosophy is Dr. Emmons's doctrine of the divine efficiency,<sup>18</sup> according to which the good and the bad in man are alike the results of God's direct operation—or, to state the fact more truly, the logical result is some form of materialistic or agnostic atheism. Only the interests of evangelical Christianity, to which this philosophical help was supposed necessary, could have made men, so consecrated and so wise in other matters, hold a view from which the common-sense of man revolts.

This denial of freedom, which is so marked a feature of our age, falling in as it does with the scientific spirit, and imposing upon multitudes who have not sufficient philosophical training to detect its fallacy and its logical consequences, is a fact full of danger. The best thought, philosophical and theological, of our time recognizes this danger, and is endeavoring to guard against it by the maintenance and vindication of a truer philosophy. It would be scarcely true to say



that the majority are at present upon this side. But fortunately such questions are not settled by majorities, but by reason and conscience. It is significant to note how the more thoughtful minds among the theologians who still accept the system of Jonathan Edwards are awakening to the peril which threatens theistic and Christian truth, and are trying to avert it. Thus, the younger Dr. Hodge, of precious memory among evangelical Christians, declares: "This matter of free-will underlies everything. If you bring it to question, it is infinitely more than Calvinism. . . . Everything is gone if free-will is gone; the moral system is gone if free-will is gone; you cannot escape, except by materialism on the one hand or pantheism on the other."<sup>19</sup> Well may he use language like this when an agnostic determinist like Huxley<sup>20</sup> asserts his entire agreement with Jonathan Edwards and the orthodox theologians respecting the doctrine of necessity. It is to be regretted that Dr. Hodge is so involved in the necessarian doctrine that he goes on to affirm the only difference between the spontaneity of a mouse and the free-will of a man to be that the latter acts "with the illumination of reason and conscience."<sup>21</sup> The truth is, in the struggle between Christianity and unbelief, the Christian is placed in a position of inevitable disadvantage, unless he is able to affirm clearly and unequivocally the freedom of the will.<sup>22</sup>

IV. Again, the theistic philosophy of man declares that he is under law. I have touched upon this truth in presenting the moral argument for the divine existence, in which the fact of a law laying obligation upon our wills is shown to be a reason for assuming the existence of an absolute Will, holy, just, and good. It is



of the utmost importance for our present task that we make good the position involved in the assertion that man is under a moral law. Morality and religion are essentially correlated ; they are different aspects of the same fact. The attitude of man toward law which we call moral becomes religious when it is considered as his attitude toward the Lawgiver. Morals and religion meet in the law of love : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

Upon this subject likewise we part company with the non-theistic philosophies. Pantheism lays great stress upon the law of right. At first it seems to maintain it with all the reverence of the theist. It repudiates the hedonistic ethics and insists upon the eternal and necessary sanctity of the right as something belonging to the very constitution of things, as inherent in God himself. But a closer examination compels us to tell a very different story. The denial of the divine personality and of human personality and freedom characteristic of pantheism vitiates its ethics, much as it contains that is valuable. Man is only a part of the great process, at once divine and natural. The law of right is a natural law, not a moral law in the true meaning of the term. It designates an ideal but does not set up an authority. It points out the course of man's development if he is to realize the germinal moral life in him, but it does not speak to his conscience in the thunder tones of a divine command laying obligation upon a being free to accept or reject. It is no personal Power, but an unconscious "Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness," in a movement of nature in which it and we alike are by necessity implicated. Such a system gives



no true basis for morality or religion. It is, in fact, no permanent resting-place for human thought. The history of philosophy shows that it always sooner or later gives place to some form of hedonistic or utilitarian ethics, if not to the denial of all ethics.

Equally unsatisfactory are the materialistic and agnostic systems of ethics. It is sufficient for our present purpose to confine ourselves to the latter. If the absolute Cause is unknown, it is evident that ethics can derive no sanction from that source; such a sanction would imply that the Absolute is holy, which is contrary to the fundamental maxim of agnosticism, that the Absolute is wholly unknown. Dean Mansel, the Christian agnostic, declared that morality might mean something different in God from what it does in man; but he supplemented agnosticism by divine revelation and thus secured a basis for ethics. Unbelieving agnostics, like Herbert Spencer, who will not avail themselves of any such *Deus ex machina*, are obliged to turn elsewhere to find a foundation for morals. Accordingly, they have recourse to the old hedonistic utilitarianism, modified by the application of the principle of evolution. "Conduct is good or bad," says Spencer, "according as its total effects are pleasurable or painful."<sup>23</sup> The pleasure which renders an act good is not necessarily that of the individual, for Spencer recognizes the fact that we are members of society, and makes a place in his theory, like Bentham and Mill, for "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," and so for "altruistic" as well as "egoistic" or "self-regarding" motives. But he says that the "general happiness is to be achieved mainly through the adequate pursuit of their own happiness by individuals; while, reciprocally, the



happinesses of individuals are to be achieved in part by their pursuit of the general happiness." <sup>24</sup> Mill had explained the moral sense by association and education. Spencer explains it by evolution and heredity. It is a constitutional instinct resulting from the accumulated experience of men as to the tendency of conduct to produce pleasure or pain, or, what is the same thing, to promote life or diminish it.

But this theory, ingeniously though it has been wrought out by the agnostic evolutionists, fails to explain the facts and affords no adequate basis for morals and religion. The distinctive feature of the moral law is the authority with which it comes. It has for its mark neither the *must* of a law of nature, nor the *should* of a law of expediency, but the *ought* of a higher Will laying obligation upon our wills. Grant that the tendency of that course of conduct which we call right is to secure the highest happiness of the individual and society, or of the individual in society, still why are we *bound* to strive for the attainment of that happiness? It is indeed expedient, desirable, important; but why should it be obligatory? These are questions the agnostic ethics cannot answer. Nor does it help the matter by the appeal to evolution; for granting that the moral sense is inherited, still how did it first acquire this element of obligation? No accumulation of infinitesimal increments of expediency will ever produce obligation. The two things belong to different spheres. Evolution, as we have seen already, breaks down when it comes to man's higher nature.

Moreover, this theory of ethics gives no sufficient foundation for man's ethico-religious exercises. Law should turn us to a personal Lawgiver, a Being whom



we can worship, a Master whom we can serve. But here we have merely an unconscious and impersonal law of nature, utterly powerless to command our reverence, our obedience, or our trust.

In the presence of these widely held and utterly erroneous systems of ethics, which reduce the moral law to a name, we need to uphold with unflinching constancy the true doctrine of right, essential to both religion and Christianity. "Right is right, since God is God." The moral law proclaims alike in conscience and in the world about us that we are under the government of a personal God who would have us holy because he is holy. Conscience is his Sinai in our souls, which flashes out denunciation of wrong, and his Calvary, from which the message of peace and good-will comes to us when we are in the way of his commandments.<sup>25</sup> We have not been put into this world to be happy, but to do right.<sup>26</sup> We may believe—and ought, since God is good, to do so—that righteousness and happiness will ultimately prove coincident. But that is an issue which we must trust to God himself; it is not the foundation of conduct, and can never be made its prime motive.

V. So we are brought to another closely related fact which our theistic philosophy asserts and vindicates, namely, that man is a responsible being. He must answer for the use of his freedom in its relation to the moral law; and the answer must be not to an impersonal law, not to his fellow-men or himself, but to God. The immense cleft between the brute and man, which has manifested itself all through our present discussion, here comes fully to light. You can neither reward nor punish a brute in any real meaning of the words reward and punish; it is not a responsible being. The



child has only a dawning responsibility. The mature man, standing out in the clear light of his moral responsibility, with the divine law arching like a firmament above him, is an accountable being, since he is free, rational, personal. Our prevalent legislative and legal ethics, so far as it assumes that human law and punishment have for their exclusive object the prevention of crime and the reformation of the criminal, mistakes the truth. Thus capital punishment has been abolished in some quarters, and the whole theory of punishment in many respects changed. But this utilitarian doctrine of responsibility degrades man to the brute's level. Why should criminals be punished? Because they are guilty—that is, because they are responsible beings and have to answer for the abuse of their freedom. What is human law? It is an expression of the divine law; otherwise it has no meaning. The magistrate is God's deputy. There is no authority but of God; and the authorities that be are ordained of God (Rom. xiii. 1). We are responsible beings and accountable to our Maker.

VI. This opens the way for the consideration of another fact asserted by the theistic philosophy, and either openly, or by implication, denied by its rivals: I refer to the fact of human sin. The doctrine of sin belongs to the sphere of natural theology and the philosophy of religion. Christianity throws a new light upon sin and reveals its true character, but it does not first disclose its existence. Sin, as has been truly said, is not a doctrine but a fact. Christianity may be true or false, but still sin is here. It is *à priori* to Christian experience, a fact without which that experience would not be possible.



What is sin? Has it a reality, as the vast majority of mankind have declared in all ages and declare to-day? or is it a mere figment of the imagination? It is of the utmost importance that we should be persuaded in our own minds as to the truth. The theistic thought which I have been expounding gives no uncertain answer to the question. As it declares that man is personal, free, under law, and responsible, so it declares that he is a sinner, and that sin is a breach of the moral law, and disobedience to God. Sin, and the consequent guilt, it recognizes as realities in the moral universe, as certain as the great realities of the physical world. Sin, it declares, is an abuse of freedom by using it in disobedience to the moral law and its divine Author. Guilt is the reaction of the divine wrath upon us when we sin, witnessed in conscience, which proclaims our responsibility as the authors of our sin.

The antagonistic philosophies I have had occasion so many times to mention, all, in some form or other, deny sin. The denial of pantheism is the most plausible and difficult to detect in its true meaning. We have seen with what fervor the pantheist insists upon the sanctity of the right in distinction from the wrong. But his theory, with the denial of the divine personality, and of human personality, freedom, and accountability, necessarily excludes sin in the meaning attached to it by the theist. If God is the source of all things, the ground of all development; if the development of nature and man is an unfolding of what from the first has been implicit in God; if nature is manifested God, and God the *natura naturans*, then what we call sin has its origin in God and is itself in a true sense divine. There is no evading this logic. Accordingly, when we come



to look more closely at pantheism, we find that it reduces sin to an element in the divine process equally necessary with goodness, though not equally good. It is finiteness, it is the outcome of the sensuous nature of man, it is a stage in development necessary for the attainment of a higher stage, it is the necessary converse of goodness—its antithesis, its opposite pole. It is a discord which is needful to the attainment of a higher harmony. In a word, it is divine as well as human, necessary rather than free, only relatively evil instead of altogether evil. And if the evil of sin is relative, so is its guilt relative. Guilt is not the responsible authorship of sin, witnessing to a broken law and a displeased God; it is an illusion, as, indeed, sin itself is an illusion. Let a man get his bearings in the universe, and sin and guilt disappear. The result is the conclusion that sin, “in itself considered,” is indeed evil; but that, “all things considered,” it is good.<sup>27</sup> Let the sinner once discover the secret and he is no longer a sinner; he is a discord necessary to the harmony, and therefore himself harmonious. This is characteristic of all pantheism; it makes light of sin.<sup>28</sup>

Agnosticism does no better. It has only this advantage, that it does not hide its meaning under religious phraseology, but says right out what it means. Of course it can only say one thing. If right is the conduct which promotes pleasure, and wrong that which promotes pain; if pleasure is conformity with environment, and pain indicates non-conformity, then sin is physical rather than ethical, it is a misfortune rather than a wrong, it carries with it defect and loss rather than guilt. The same thing follows from the determinism which is essential to the agnostic view. If



men are not free, then sin does not involve responsibility and guilt. The conclusion cannot be evaded if we admit the premises. Moreover, if the Absolute is unknown, yet the Cause of all phenomena, there is no room for responsibility. In fact, since sin is a phenomenon, the agnostic, like the pantheist, makes the Absolute responsible for sin—if such a shadowy being as the agnostic Absolute can be conceived of as responsible for anything.

The application of evolution caps the climax of the agnostic doctrine of sin; it explains the whole history of the world as a process by which things are attaining greater and greater conformity with their environment. Accordingly, sin is not, as the Catechism has it, "want of conformity to the law of God," but want of conformity to environment; in other words, partially evolved conduct,<sup>29</sup> which in due time, if left to itself, will attain complete development; so that, as a witty English minister said a few years ago, the evolutionary man does not exclaim with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" but, "O progressive creature that I am! who shall help me to evolve myself?"<sup>30</sup>

All this is perfectly natural and consistent. The agnostic has no choice but to argue as he does. By and by, when he has thought his philosophy through, he must—unless he rejects it altogether—remodel society, religion, and individual life in accordance with this theory, that is, with sin left out. The chief effort of government and individual activity must then be to accelerate evolution, and who shall say what answer can be given to those who do not care to have it accelerated? For why should evolution be completed? What obligation



are men under to acquiesce in this method of nature? Evolution means the "survival of the fittest." That means, in the beginnings of evolution, the survival of the physically strongest. Then, as intelligence gets the upper hand in the struggle for existence, it comes to mean the survival of the cunningest. Finally, it comes to mean the survival of the best, that is, of those who most advance individual and social welfare in the highest spheres. But granting that evolution tends to advance along such lines of beneficent progress, suppose that the physically strong and the intellectually cunning decline to be elbowed out of existence by the morally good? What right have you to insist that men should be good? Has not sin its rights as truly as virtue? or rather, is it sin at all? Why all this pains to get above animality, when animality is, after all, the goal as well as the starting-point? So the evolutionary ethics destroys itself.

Only the theistic view of man, insisting as it does upon the divine personality and relation to the soul, and upon human freedom and responsibility under the divine law, can satisfy the requirements of the problem. Sin is not a phantom, but a reality, an awful fact in God's moral universe; and man, the sinner, is guilty and condemned, the object of God's displeasure, obnoxious to his punishments. Sin is the one absolute evil in the universe, not relative in any sense, except that God permits it and controls it. It is utterly hateful to God, utterly antagonistic to the good, utterly opposed to man's true nature and destination. Every attempt to explain it away or to diminish its evil is based upon error. It is bad, and only bad.

VII. The theistic philosophy of man also affirms the



relation of individual sin to the sin of the race. This likewise is a truth of natural theology or of the philosophy of religion.

As regards this fact, recent philosophical and scientific thought, even in forms in other respects antagonistic to Christian theism, has contributed to a truer view than that which at one time prevailed. Deism viewed mankind as an aggregate of separated and disconnected persons. Its whole thought was concerned with the individual. In opposition to the realistic philosophies and theologies it was atomistic. The traditional orthodoxy, starting as it did from the positions of Augustin and Calvin, was theoretically opposed to this view. But, as we have seen, at the beginning of the present century there was a strong rationalistic or deistic tendency manifest in orthodox theology. It showed itself in that prevailing individualism of thought which attained its extreme expression in the so-called New-England theology. But the theistic philosophy and the orthodox theology of the present time have returned to the older and truer view, or rather, let me say, have advanced to a truer construction of the old view. We distinguish between the race and the individual, between mankind and men. We recognize the fact that the individual does not live by himself, independently of his fellows, but lives only in virtue of his connection with mankind. The race is an organism, a whole composed of parts which are mutually means and ends, and which together contribute to common ends. Modern science has called renewed attention to the principle of heredity, according to which the child comes into the world with traits and dispositions derived from its ancestors, destined to exert an untold influence upon



the later life. In infancy the child is but a shoot of the parent stem ; it has no individual life ; left to itself it would die in a day ; it is wrapped up and included in the parental life.<sup>31</sup> Yet this is the time of strongest impressions, when the mind is moulded and receives the shape it is to have in after years. The child grows and is educated in the family and the school, with play-mates and friends, in the church, in society. The most of its knowledge is, if not second-hand, at least shaped by the beliefs and opinions of others. Then, all through life the man or woman is among men and women, influenced by the common culture, the prevalent opinions—moral, religious, professional, business, political. In this intricate net-work of extraneous influences freedom, indeed, has its place and does its work. The character is, in a true sense, a man's own. The great decisions of life he makes for himself. But freedom does its work within limits. The shuttle is shot through threads already prepared for it ; the pattern is, to a considerable extent, predetermined. We have some power over our environment, but it has a great power over us. We can never wholly cut ourselves off from the tree of humanity. Like the coral polyps, we are members of a community.

Now sin, the great human curse, has entrenched itself in this complicated and mysterious region of connection between the individual and the race. There is a corporate sin as there is an individual sin, and the individual sin is implicated in the corporate sin. It is not my intention to enter here into any of the controversial questions mooted by the theologians respecting what is called "original sin," nor is it needful for our present discussion to do so. It will be sufficient to



speak of the facts concerning which almost all agree. Sin has obtained such a foothold in the race relations of men that every individual of the race who comes to the period of responsible action, abuses his freedom and becomes a personal sinner. We may not be able to draw the line between the general and the personal. We certainly need, in order that there may be room for personal responsibility, to maintain at all hazards the freedom of the individual in his sin. But we know that, as a matter of fact, all sin and come short of the glory of God. The individual thus appropriates the common evil, and what before was not his is thereupon truly predicated of him. His personal guilt grows out of, and in turn strikes down deep roots into, a race guilt. All men, when they reach the period of reflection, find themselves members of a guilty race, involved in it not only by a process of nature but also by their own fault.

Let it be understood that I am not speaking now of the teachings of the Bible. Our concern at present is with that philosophy of religion which is a presupposition of Christianity, not with Christianity itself. My conviction is that all I have claimed as true can be proved by philosophy, and would be just as true, though certainly not as evident, if the apostle Paul had never written the fifth chapter of Romans or the fifteenth of First Corinthians. I have said nothing of the Fall. This is a doctrine of revelation, at least so far as its historical form is concerned. Speculation is not competent to inform us what the actual beginnings of sin were. The most we can say, looking at the subject from the philosophical point of view, is that man, as made by God, must have been sinless and free, and



sinless that he might use his freedom for God ; to which may be added that the first man who sinned must have done so by the abuse of his freedom. Here we have what is essential to the doctrine of the Fall, and the most that we can expect from natural theology.

One point, however, in this connection. We have seen how inadequate the theory of evolution is to explain the nature of sin ; it is equally unable to account for the beginnings of sin. Evolution involves a steady progress. The Fall, if it actually occurred, was a break in the chain of evolution which cannot be explained by that law. Here, as elsewhere, the doctrine, so valuable as a scientific hypothesis, so luminous in its explanation of large tracts of natural history, breaks down when it comes to humanity. In man a higher principle appears, which is subject to a different law. Man's animal nature may be the result of evolution ; that is a small matter, and few who understand what organic evolution means care much one way or the other. Even man's higher nature may be under the law of evolution, so far as it is subject to necessity. But there are elements there which belong to a higher and different order, and, even in their perversion, must be explained in a different way. Evolution, if it attempts an explanation of the beginnings of sin, must make the Fall a "fall upward," as it has been called. But that is no explanation ; rather it is the darkening of knowledge and the confusion of thought. This natural law does not run on continuously into the spiritual world but becomes subordinate to a higher principle.

VIII. Still further, the theistic philosophy asserts that man was made for God, and finds his highest



good in him. It has already been intimated that man's moral endowments merge in his religious nature, and that morals and religion are only different aspects of the same reality. Theistic philosophy cannot refrain from putting the question concerning the *summum bonum* and offering its answer to it. For what was man placed here in the world? what is his true destination? What is the goal of the individual and the race? In opposition to all pessimistic theories of man, and to those forms of agnosticism which refuse to answer the question of man's destination, theism is persistently optimistic. It declares that man is steadily moving forward to a high moral goal. Agnostic evolution, it is true, rather inconsistently, is also optimistic in a certain sense, since it declares that the race is advancing in the process of evolution. But its optimism concerns the race rather than the individual, and does not point to the highest spiritual ends.<sup>32</sup>

But the theistic philosophy bases its optimism upon what is highest in man, his relation to God. He is a personal being, made in the image of God, and he is able to know, serve, and love God. God reveals himself to men; they are able, in the use of their faculties, to come to the knowledge of God. They are formed for communion with him. He is their life. To have his favor is their highest blessedness. His law is the rule of their conduct; to him they are answerable. In him they live and move and have their being, physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually. As Augustin said, "O Lord, we were made for thee, and our souls are restless till they find their rest in thee."<sup>33</sup>

This is the declaration of all religions, and not of Christianity alone. In spite of their innumerable er-



rors and abuses and immoralities, they testify to man's need for God. The goal of the individual and the race is communion with God and likeness to him. We cannot doubt the assertion of our reason upon this subject. The moral and spiritual ideals combine with the moral and spiritual relations to God to assure us that we are his children, and that we were made to realize his image in us and to live in his presence and favor.

This is the reason why the theistic philosophy of religion insists so strongly, in opposition to pantheism and agnosticism, upon the immortality of the soul, and will not admit that we are thrown back exclusively upon the Christian revelation for the proof that death does not end all. It declares that the soul which is capable of communion with God here and now, and which bears upon it the marks of its destination to be like God, cannot be "cast as rubbish to the void" when death destroys the body. Here is something too high, too precious, for that. The personality of man is, as we have seen, altogether different from the individuality of the animal. Its relation to God gives it a kind of divine value. The non-theistic philosophers say that the belief in immortality is merely the expression of man's desire to live; *stat pro ratione voluntas*. He does not want to perish, and so is convinced that he will not. In his vanity he thinks himself better than the brute, and is too proud to accept the common doom. So men in all ages think they will survive the shock of death, and all religions try to give reasons for the belief. It is the part of philosophy, however, to get behind the error, and to show that men are mortal, soul as well as body. Pantheism, which has the art to



utter the most obnoxious doctrines in the gentlest and least offensive way, does not discard the word immortality. It admits that thought can never perish, but for that which makes man man, his individual self-conscious personality, it holds out no hope of permanence.<sup>34</sup> Agnosticism, in the person of its most accomplished authoress, sings of an immortality in the "choir invisible"—in the posthumous influence of earthly deeds and words; but it knows no other.<sup>35</sup> Theism alone teaches the true worth, and so the true destination, of man.

IX. This brings us to the last point—the theistic philosophy asserts man's need of redemption. This much it is sufficient to prove, though insufficient to answer the question, what the nature of the redemption shall be, and in what way it shall be bestowed upon man. Man as a sinner is far from his goal. Neither the individual nor the race has reached it. It is not merely that man lags in the process of development; he has turned aside and back. All have gone astray, and the race are following devious ways. So, in spite of the theistic optimism, there is a pessimistic side to the truth. The philosophy of theism maintains the truth of two apparently contradictory facts: the ideal of human perfection and the perversion of man through sin. It recognizes the fact that sin is the great hindering cause in the progress of the world, as in that of the individual. No man is what he might be or what he ought to be. The institutions of society are corrupt. Sin has rooted itself deeply in the soil of humanity. Great wrongs which no man, or body of men, seem strong enough to right, have fastened themselves, vampire-like, upon the race. Men tyrannize over their fel-



low-men. Civilization and science are made to minister to sin. Even the physical world is scarred and seamed with the marks of man's sinfulness.

Hence the need of redemption. Somehow the individual and the race must be brought out of their sin and evil and disease, and carried forward to their goal. Theistic philosophy goes thus far. It is sufficient to prove man's need of redemption. Indeed, the fact is thrust upon it whenever it contemplates the world and men as they are. It needs no deep insight into moral truth to teach the thoughtful man who lives in a great city like London or New York, and views the awful sin and misery which prevail, the festering evil which hides in the darkness, and the brazen-faced wickedness which flaunts itself in the daylight, that there is an imminent and imperative need of raising men from their degradation. It requires but little knowledge of the world to be impressed with the crying need for reform in the institutions and customs of society. He who believes that there is a God active here and now, at work in human history and individual life, and who realizes that man was made for God, and can find his true blessedness in him alone, must recognize the absolute necessity of redemption.

It must be understood that the redemption, the need of which is witnessed to by the theistic philosophy, means something more than mere reform or betterment, such as may be brought about by natural or human means. Sin has reduced men to a condition from which deliverance can come only through supernatural and superhuman help. Sin involves inability. The sinner is helpless to deliver himself. His will is bound, not in the sense that he does not possess the power of choice,



but because he has lost the power of action. His intellect is blinded, so that he could not see clearly how to deliver himself, if he had the ability. His sensibility is disordered. His conscience is loaded down with guilt. And if he cannot help himself, still less can he help his fellow-man, who like himself is bound fast in the chains of sin; and what is true of the individual is equally true of the race. The deliverance must come from above, if it is to come at all, from the one being in all the universe who is capable of furnishing it, that is, from God.

The philosophies which deny the personality of God and teach the lower view of man, also deny the need of redemption. Because they make light of sin, the need of a moral transformation does not appear great to them; and such reformation as they see to be needful—for the denial of redemption is made rather with the lips than with the heart, and the awful fact of sin presses itself in some form or other upon every thinking mind with a persistent intrusion that cannot be evaded—they endeavor to bring about by natural and human means. So they offer such remedies as they have, insufficient enough, but a testimony to the crying need. The favorite remedy is culture. Education is the panacea; knowledge of literature, of the arts, of science, of this and that; but knowledge and the taste that is cultivated by knowledge, and nothing more. But the remedies do not cure the disease; in fact, in many cases they rather aggravate it. Culture, intellectual power, the gratification of the tastes, may all be made to minister to sin, and this is too often the result where they are unaccompanied by higher influences. Pantheism has shown itself thus far utterly unable to cope with human sin or



to offer any adequate means of redemption from it. This is true whether we look at the philosophical pantheism of Germany or at the literary pantheism of Carlyle and Emerson with its high-sounding words and fine contempt of all that is mean and low. Agnosticism has not run a career so long, but it has fallen heir to the resources of the earlier materialism and utilitarianism, and we can form some judgment of its probable success. I should be slow to refuse it the praise that is its due. It has set itself to correct the abuses and wrongs which prevail in human society. It has done much to promote the well-being of the individual and the masses. We cannot speak in too strong terms of commendation respecting what has been done by men professing this philosophy for the material improvement of the lower classes, in the way of better sanitary arrangements for the poor, the promotion of association in labor by which the workman may share in the profits of his skill, the extension of the electoral franchise, and the like. But such attempts at the amelioration of the outward condition of men seem scarcely to touch the deep need of the sinful race.

The old deism, and the rationalistic philosophy and religion connected with it, sought to do the same work by moral means. This was a higher method. At first it seemed as if men could save themselves if they only would. If the will is free, and many of the deists admitted that this is the case, there seems to be no obstacle in the way of moral reformation and self-improvement. The German rationalists of the last century, and the early Unitarians of England and this country, employed this method. Within certain narrow limits they succeeded. Undoubtedly in the case of individuals



who still stood in the old orthodox traditions, and were, though aberrant in doctrine, actually leading lives of communion with God, a high type of character was attained. Especially in the sphere of what the old theologians, as we have seen, called "civil righteousness," where human freedom has been least affected by sin, they set an example of noble morality for which the world cannot be too thankful. In the work of social reform their achievements were also high. They gave the impulse to many of the most beneficent moral movements of modern times. It was largely owing to their influence that slavery was overthrown in this country. But this deistic form of religion and philosophy has always had one result. After a time the movement has lost its power and come to a standstill, leaving the actual achievement but small in comparison with the world's great need. Those who have accepted the tenets of this school have either gone back into orthodoxy, where alone they could find a philosophy and religion which could satisfy their needs, or have gone off into pantheism and agnosticism.

All the religions of mankind recognize the need of redemption. I do not doubt that the craving of men for communion with God, and the knowledge of him they have through the natural revelation, would be sufficient to give rise to religion apart from the fact of sin. But sin is the moving cause of religion in the world as it is. Men feel their misery, they long for release, they cry to God for help, they seek redemption. The means the ethnic religions offer are inadequate and perverted. The very sin which has obscured the knowledge of God devises methods of redemption which are not only wholly ineffectual for the purpose, but wholly



unworthy of God. It seems as if the sinful human heart had exhausted its ingenuity in devising bad and immoral instrumentalities for the effecting of redemption. Cars of Juggernaut, human sacrifices, self-inflicted tortures, immoral rites, pious frauds—who does not know the long catalogue? How sad it all is! and yet what a testimony to the universal recognition of human need. In all the error and vice of the heathen religions there is this appeal to God for redemption.

The theistic philosophy of religion takes account of all these facts. They are part of the data upon which it bases its conviction that men must be redeemed if they are to attain the goal for which they were manifestly created. Taking its stand upon its own true and satisfying doctrines of God and man, it is able to discover the defects in the methods of the heathen religions, and to separate the testimony to the universal need and cry for salvation from the perverted notions of how it is to be attained. Here is a race blindly seeking after God, if haply it may find him, raising up its hands to him in eager appeal for help. If that were all, it were pitiful. That there should be a God in heaven, nay, a God on earth, and yet no light and no help for men lost and perishing, that were indeed terrible.

The theistic philosophy of religion is competent to disclose the need of redemption. Its conception of God as the holy, just, and wise Ruler of mankind, the personal God who is not far from every one of us, affords good hope that God will bestow the means of redemption. Theism gives such a knowledge of God that all methods of self-redemption—redemption by culture or reform or morality—must be discarded as manifestly in-



adequate, and the fact must be recognized that only God himself can furnish the help that is needed.

With this last fact we are brought to the line that separates the philosophy of religion from the Christian theology. The universal religious experience must give way to Christian experience. Reason dealing with the universal facts of religion can go no farther.



## LECTURE IV.

### THE GENESIS OF THE EVIDENCE.

WE have seen that the evidence of Christian experience is based upon that element of Christianity which consists in the immediate and present redeeming activity of God in Christ.<sup>1</sup> Christian experience itself begins when a man comes fairly under the influence of this activity, when the redemption is at work in his soul, and the divine power from which it proceeds is thus revealed. It is my purpose in the present lecture to trace the process by which the evidence we are considering is first established through the initial experience of the Christian life. In the next lecture we shall examine the growth of the proof in extent and cogency as the Christian becomes more and more fully possessed by the divine redemption.

I enter upon this branch of our discussion with some trepidation. If I can succeed in so presenting the subject as to make you realize that we are in the midst of a realm of spiritual *facts*, full of dignity and importance, all will be well. But if, on the other hand, I seem to give you merely an edifying presentation of pious feelings and experiences, or a statement of doctrinal truths, what I have to say will be ineffably commonplace. I beg you, therefore, to understand that our aim is not edification or doctrinal instruction. The work upon which we are engaged is one of the highest scientific im-



portance. Let us not unwittingly copy the unbeliever's attitude toward Christian experience and treat it as though it were a matter of sentiment rather than a subject of rational thought. We believe this experience to be real; our certainty of its reality is not less strong than our certainty respecting the other great facts of human experience in the outward and the inward worlds. We regard our faith as the most reasonable exercise of our rational activity. Let us have the courage of our convictions. If we are right, here is a field for scientific research of the utmost importance. If it is a noble thing for men, in their search for truth, to devote themselves to the investigation of the phenomena of the material and physical world, or of those of the inner world of thought, why is it not a nobler and higher thing to devote themselves to the investigation of this lofty sphere of spiritual reality, where God in his supreme revelation enters our souls and moulds them by his grace? If we are not ashamed to make the Christian consciousness a source of theology, why should we be ashamed to make it a ground of evidence? The world has a right to demand of us that we should give reason for the faith that is in us. Besides, even if our Christian explanation should prove inadequate, here is a realm of facts which demand investigation. Even unbelief no longer treats the experience of the Christian as a mere delusion, but regards it as a series of phenomena possessing the highest and most striking psychological interest, to which it strives to give a rational, though, of course, naturalistic, explanation.

We begin with the natural or unconverted man, with his natural experience of God, his sinfulness and need of redemption—the facts that have been established in



the philosophical presuppositions as stated in the two previous lectures. Our object is to trace the workings of such a soul, as God's redemptive grace in Christ enters it, takes possession of it, and transforms it; and to show how this redemptive transformation is the ground of the highest and most cogent proof for the truth of Christianity. I shall try to describe a normal Christian experience, such as the Bible delineates, such as is narrated in innumerable books of Christian biography, and such as the ordinary believer recognizes as in the main his own. That this is possible, in spite of the diversity arising from different types of Christianity, and from the varying temperaments and circumstances of individuals, I do not doubt.<sup>2</sup>

I. Let us look first at the preliminary experience by which the entrance into the Christian life is made. And here the first and essential fact which meets us is *that the initiative is known as coming from God*. The prelude to the distinctively Christian experience is God's redemptive seeking of the soul. He comes with the arraignment, the demand, the offer, and the promise of the Gospel. His gracious working begins in what is known in Scripture and theology as the divine call.

This fact of the divine initiative is all-important. The sinner who is redeemed by the grace of God in Christ does not first seek God; rather God seeks him, and only then does he become a seeker. Later Christian experience reveals the fact that from the beginning of life there has been a divine seeking, and even that it goes back of life into the eternal purpose of God. This is the truth of the Christian doctrine of predestination or election, which, liable though it is to be misunderstood and abused, often as it has been hard-



ened into a lifeless dogma, has a mighty significance. But we have now to do not so much with the eternal purpose, which only a mature faith can discern when it has advanced somewhat far into the knowledge of God in Christ, and of the Scriptures, as with the initiative of God through his Spirit at the outset of the Christian life.

The divine initiative bears two aspects, an external and an internal, clearly distinguishable, yet inseparably connected in reality, the former being the means or medium of the latter.

1. We look first at the external aspect. This also is twofold, being effected through two instrumentalities, the objective Gospel or Word, and the witnessing church.<sup>3</sup>

(1.) The outward Word is an essential means. We saw in the first lecture that Christianity involves three elements, all of which are essential to its completeness. These are the divine revelation in its two forms of history and doctrine, or of facts and truths, and the present redemptive power and agency of God. The latter does its work only by the aid of the two former—that is to say, only thus does it do its work normally and fully. In order that men may enter into the sphere of Christian experience, they must have some knowledge of the divine revelation. The knowledge supplied by the general religious experience of men is not sufficient for this purpose. And when Christian experience has begun, it is needful to its right interpretation, as well as to progress in it, that the divine revelation in both its aspects should be known and understood. We can conceive of the case of a heathen to whom the grace of God comes without the mediation



of the objective Gospel, who has never heard of Christ, but who, accepting God with such light as he has, is made partaker of the divine redemption, brought to the Father by Christ through the Holy Spirit, forgiven on the ground of the Saviour's atonement, entering, at least measurably, into the life of holiness through the Spirit's efficiency, and all the time ignorant of the great Christian facts. I say, we can conceive of such a case. To what extent such cases actually exist I do not undertake to affirm; but believing as I do, with undoubting conviction, that God condemns no man for ignorance or lack of opportunity, it seems to me not unreasonable to suppose not only that in some instances the germ of the divine life may exist in heathen hearts (that, I hope, is often the case), but also that it may arrive at a certain degree of maturity in this life, though of course the growth could never be what it might have been under consciously recognized Christian influences. Now such a heathen would know, if he investigated his experience by the methods of reflective thought, that he was a changed man, standing in a new relation to God, under the influence of divine mercy. But no examination and analysis of his experience, without the knowledge of the objective Gospel, would enable him to discover the trinitarian character of the divine grace, its basis in the atonement, and the truth of God's redemptive kingdom. These realities would be implicit in his consciousness, because they would be the real cause of it; but there is no reason to believe that, left to himself, he would ever be able to distinguish them and bring them clearly before his thought. Nor should we expect to see such a person make any high attainments in the religious life as



judged by the Christian standard. In a word, his experience would not be, in any adequate sense of the term, a Christian experience.

What, then, is this Gospel or Word which is an essential means in God's hands for bringing men into the sphere of Christian experience? Though, broadly considered, it comprises all the facts and truths of the redemptive revelation, it is capable of brief and simple statement. It reaffirms with the strongest emphasis, what men already know from the natural revelation, the sinfulness, lost condition, and need of redemption of the human soul. Then it proclaims the divine love which would not leave mankind in their lost estate but provided redemption for them; and the historical facts of the redemptive revelation, God's long series of redemptive dealings with the human race through the Chosen People, and the consummation of his grace in Jesus Christ. It tells of the incarnation and earthly life of the Christ; of his divinely human person, full of grace and truth; of his atoning death upon the cross; of his resurrection and ascension to the throne of majesty on high; of the mission of the Holy Spirit, through whom the Christ is laboring for the salvation of the human race. It makes the divine offer of forgiveness and new life to all who will accept it, an offer which looks forward to the complete deliverance of the sinner from his sin and his rehabilitation as a son of God in the perfection of the heavenly blessedness. It promises that those who accept shall have that personal knowledge of God and Christ which is life eternal. It gives the assurance of the future triumph of the Saviour's kingdom in the redemption of mankind and the final subjection of Satan and his kingdom.



Such, in substance, is the Gospel or Word, as it has been preached in all ages since the days of Christ. The inspired repository of this Gospel and the record of all the facts and truths which constitute the redemptive revelation is the Bible. The old theology, with its rationalistic tendency, failed clearly to distinguish between the Scripture and the revelation and Gospel of which it is the inspired document. The result in the spheres of apologetics and theology was disastrous. Not a few of the difficulties and hindrances against which the Christian church is contending to-day are traceable to this cause. Nevertheless, we must not ignore the fact that there is the closest and most vital connection between the facts and truths recorded and the inspired record, between the Gospel and the Bible. It is true that the Gospel has existed without the Bible, and it is perfectly conceivable that it might do so again. Many souls are brought to Christ to-day, with comparatively small personal acquaintance with the Scripture, by the preacher's message, by the instructions of parents and teachers, by the reading of Christian books, and other similar agencies. Yet the fact remains that the Gospel depends for its purity and adequacy upon the Bible. The latter, as the divinely inspired record of the redemptive revelation, is the rule and guide of the church and the individual in all matters pertaining to the redemptive revelation. There is no reason to believe that the Gospel could be maintained for any length of time in its purity, if it were not continually drawn afresh from this perennial spring. Here we find not only the "marrow of the Gospel," but all that is essential to its understanding, and all that pertains to its application. It is enforced by precept and illus-



trated by example. Not only does the Bible teach the way into the kingdom, but it is also the guide of the Christian to holiness, Christian service, and the heavenly blessedness. There never was any Christian experience, after the Bible had become the possession of the church, that could not be traced back to the Bible as its source; there never was any mature and complete Christian experience that did not grow out of the diligent personal use of the Bible.<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, while for the sake of theological accuracy we insist upon the distinction between the Gospel and the Bible, yet for practical purposes we may say that the first great outward means employed by God to bring men into his kingdom is the Bible. I desire to lay the strongest emphasis upon this point. In presenting the evidence of Christian experience, I shall run the risk of being understood to teach that the Christian has an access to God and the Christian realities which renders him independent of the objective Word and the Bible which is its inspired source. I have no such heresy to advance. The only Christian experience to which I shall appeal is one that finds its origin and norm in the Bible, an experience shaped and interpreted by the Bible. To take any other position would be to desert the fundamental principles of Christianity and Protestantism, and to run into an unchristian mysticism.

(2.) But there is another instrumentality employed by God in his work of redemption as it relates to the individual; I refer to the witnessing church. The Gospel call comes to the soul through the agency of those who stand in the midst of the Christian experience, knowing it not only through the outward Word, but also by an inward spiritual acquaintance with its truth.



God has seen fit to save men by means of men, and these the men who have already tasted and seen that the Lord is good. In this he has shown his divine wisdom. We are so constituted that we do not stand alone in our experiences. We drink at the overflowing cup of our fellow-men. All human progress depends upon this relation of man to man. It is, as we have seen, the ground of that diffusion of sin through the race as the result of which each individual, though not without his own personal fault, becomes himself a sinner. It accords with the fitness of things that redemption should avail itself of the same relation to accomplish its beneficent ends. It is thus that God reaches the sinful soul, preparing it for his inward call, and bringing that call home to it.

In childhood, when we are so largely dependent upon others for our knowledge and beliefs, when the developing personality is not yet wholly detached from the common life, the Christian experience of parents and friends exerts a powerful influence, the effects of which may endure through a lifetime. The child looks through its mother's eyes into the sanctuary of Christian experience, and in the godly walk and conversation of a Christian father has before it the indubitable evidence of the reality of the Gospel. In like manner the impulse to the Christian life comes through the instructions of pious teachers, the persuasions of companions who have already entered the kingdom, the counsels and example of elder Christians. Especially is the influence of the church as a corporate institution to be emphasized. The church stands for the reality of Christianity. It is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. iii. 15), because it unites and upholds the per-



sonal experience of its members. This appears in the most important of its functions, the preaching of the Gospel. Preaching has no meaning unless it comes directly out of the living experience of the church and of him who in the name of the church presents the Gospel. One who knows, standing up in the midst of those who know, holds forth to those who as yet do not know, the message of salvation from the living God and the exalted Christ. The sacraments of the church are also a witness to the reality of Christian experience, an outward and visible sign of a gracious spiritual transaction between Christ and believers, intended not only for their immediate recipients, but also for the instruction of those outside, who are thus, as it were, taken into the circle of the inner Christian life.<sup>6</sup>

2. But the divine call bears an internal as well as an external aspect. The Gospel and the church are only the media through which God speaks to the soul. He comes with a direct summons to the sinner. It is not merely that the latter finds in the Gospel a call to such as he and appropriates it, or that he discovers the voice of God in the persuasions of Christians. He is conscious of an immediate and personal communication of God to his soul. He has known before, as every man does, something of God in the common exercises of his religious nature, as the Absolute, the Creator, the Infinite Reason, the Holy One, the object of all reverence and worship; but now God reveals himself in a new aspect, as the God of redemption, bringing the saving grace near to him personally and individually, and pressing it upon his acceptance. This personal call is the great crisis in the soul's life. When it comes, the sinner stands face to face with God, with the issues



of eternity depending upon his answer. We may believe that such a call is sooner or later given to every soul, though in some cases it is rejected and does not prove itself to be an "effectual call." Making due allowance for the impossibility of knowing the objective Gospel, it seems reasonable to believe that even the heathen receives such a call, in which God comes into his consciousness with his gracious offer, and Christ is within his grasp, though he knows only that the supreme good is being offered to him from above.

3. The contents of the internal divine call are not different from those of the objective Gospel. It is the Gospel made personal, applied by God himself immediately to the soul. We may distinguish an arraignment, an offer, a demand, and a promise.

First, the arraignment. God speaks to the man as a sinner, one who has rebelled against him, broken his law, contracted his just displeasure. He measures the character and life by the standard of the perfect divine law and shows how utterly they come short. He addresses the conscience and brings home to it its guilt. The soul stands before him, lost, naked, helpless. The wrath of God is revealed against its unrighteousness.

But the wrath does not stand alone; it is merely an element in the divine love. With the arraignment is coupled the offer of God's grace. The God against whom the sinner has sinned comes to him in infinite compassion with the free gift of redemption through his Son. It is a personal offer. God does not make it in a merely general way through the Gospel, but immediately and directly to the individual soul: "Here, O guilty sinner, are forgiveness and new life for thee! Jesus has died upon the cross for thy salvation; he, the



exalted Lord and Saviour, holds out these gifts to thee." In the offer is included all that the sinner needs, restoration to God's favor, the renewal of God's image in him, the overcoming of sin, and the attainment of holiness, power for service, and the heavenly blessedness.

The offer is accompanied by the demand. God does not bestow his redemptive grace upon unwilling souls. He conditions its bestowal upon the sinner's appropriation of it and lays upon him the duty of acceptance. "The will is the man." In moral and religious matters the will is always the chief thing. A divine gift is offered that may be accepted or rejected, a divine demand is made that the gift be accepted. Here again it is a personal demand. There is a direct inward call to the individual soul, and it is at the same time an imperative call that brooks no delay or compromise. Of all the demands that are made upon the human conscience there is none that will match this in its intense directness and urgency.

So we are brought to the promise. It is this: That the soul, if it obeys the divine command and accepts the divine offer, shall have through its own experience the certainty of the truth of the Gospel and the reality of all that God has offered through his grace. If it will but taste, it shall see that the Lord is good. If it will but put itself in the way of doing the divine will, it shall know of the doctrine. It is a promise to the soul that puts its trust in Christ that it shall not be confounded, but shall find in his grace the satisfaction of all its longings, its permanent rest and peace.

4. What now is the effect of the divine call upon the soul to which it comes? In the first place, there is,



on the part of the sinner, a realization of his lost condition. The sinful soul sees itself in its true relation to God—guilty, undone, helpless. It has no goodness to plead, it can make no atonement for its sin, it has no excuse to offer, it cannot hide itself from his displeasure, it cannot deny the righteousness of his punishments. I do not assert that this sense of sin is equally prominent in all cases where God's call comes to the soul, or that it has the same meaning in those instances where the divine grace is rejected that it has where it is accepted. Nor do I assert that the knowledge of sin before conversion is comparable in completeness with that which follows this great crisis. All that I insist is, that in every normal experience there is something that can be truly called a conviction of sin. Connected with this is a response to the divine offer and demand, a sense of the divine mercy of the former, and the reasonableness and urgency of the latter.

But it is especially important for our purpose to notice that even in this preliminary experience there is a certain degree of knowledge respecting the reality and divinity of the facts which constitute the Christian experience, a certain evidence of their truth, though not the evidence we are seeking to investigate. This is implied in what precedes. It seems at first to be at variance with the divine promise which postpones the knowledge of the reality and divinity of Christianity till after the divine demand has been complied with. The truth is this; there is a partial and preliminary knowledge based upon the pre-Christian experience; but this is altogether uncertain and inadequate as compared with the knowledge which comes through the actual Christian experience itself.



Let us look for a moment at this preliminary knowledge and the evidence that accompanies it. The call of the Gospel, as it comes inwardly and directly to the soul, is a divine call. We know it as such by the same criteria which evidence the divine to us in the other manifestations of God to man. It is because men have already known God in that religious experience which is common to all men, that they recognize his presence and power in this experience that is preliminary to the Christian. God does not come to the sinner whom he calls into his kingdom as a Being hitherto unknown; rather he is recognized as the same God manifesting himself in a new form and for new ends. It is as a man who has already come in contact with the divine that the awakened sinner enters upon the new experience. In the fact that the contents of the Gospel are thus brought with divine authority to him, the Christian has a reason for believing that the Christian experience which the Gospel describes, is real.

Closely connected with this proof from the divine character of the Gospel call, is that from the adaptation to the sinner's need of the divine grace offered. We know ourselves at once as members of a sinful race and as personally sinful, guilty before God, and resting under his displeasure. We are free, and because free, responsible. We know our sin and guilt through our natural experience. Conscience condemns us, and declares us guilty before God. We know, too, through our natural experience what is our duty and what are our possibilities. We know that we were made to know, love, and obey God, and to love our fellow-men. The fact that we have lost our birthright and turned aside from our true career, does not make our duty different.



We know that we ought to be the perfect men we are not, and to obey the perfect law of God. So, as was stated in the last lecture, the final word which natural religion utters, is of man's need of redemption. Now, the Gospel in its outward and inward call to the soul offers to us just what we most need, namely, redemption, a divine salvation, every step of which is so ordered as to make the consummation practicable and certain. It is a redemption through One who is at once God and Man, thus being God's representative and ours; One who has, we are told, made complete atonement for our sins, so that God is ready to forgive all who will accept his grace, and be their Father. This Saviour, it is said, is upon the throne; it is he who is speaking to us and working upon us through his Spirit; and if we accept him by faith, our sins will be forgiven, the Holy Spirit will enter our lives, our wills will be brought back to their allegiance, and through sanctification and service in communion with him we shall be carried forward to our goal and eternal life be perfected in us.

This offer is congruous to our nature and our state as sinners whose great need is redemption. Here is a redemption which offers to accomplish the work. It gives us in promise all that we need; first, forgiveness, the new heart, sonship; then, as the result, the new life and the progress to perfection. It offers a Saviour able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him (Heb. vii. 25). This congruousness of the offer of redemption to our need is itself an evidence of the truth of Christianity of no small value.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, this knowledge and the evidence based upon it, though genuine as far as they go, are not to be compared with the knowledge and evidence accompany-



ing even the lowest stages of the Christian experience. They afford a presumption rather than an adequate proof. They give the inquirer a reasonable basis for action, but not the reality itself. At this stage it is impossible to have a full proof of Christianity. Its redemptive power is as yet untried, and the great distinctive Christian facts are as yet unknown through experience.<sup>7</sup> Though the knowledge of this stage is based upon the divine authority, it is not personal knowledge; if accepted, it must be outwardly only. Moreover, and this is in some respects the most important consideration, at this point the knowledge and evidence may be resisted; and, so long as the soul hesitates to comply with the divine demand, they are practically resisted.

There is, then, only one way in which we can come to the real and adequate knowledge of the divinity and reality of the facts and truths of Christianity, and that is by trial. Here is a sphere from which we must remain forever debarred, unless we enter it by the one door which the Gospel opens, namely, the door of a personal acceptance. The beginning of Christian experience depends upon the will; it is a moral experience.

So the two stand confronting each other, God and the soul—God with Christ's redemption, offering it to the soul. And here let me stop and once more beg you not to think that I am presenting doctrine or talking sentiment; I am trying to describe facts, in comparison with which all other facts are insignificant. This is an experience through which you all have gone, and through which every man must go. The world pauses to contemplate Cæsar on the brink of the Rubi-



con, and history finds no theme more high and worthy. But what was Rome compared with Christ! what sight is more worthy of the highest thought than the soul standing on the brink of its spiritual Rubicon, with the eternal issues depending upon its choice! The choice must be made. The soul knows itself to be free. It can accept or reject. It must do one of the two. It cannot turn from God's method and devise a method of its own. The redemption in Christ comes as the only resource. This is the supreme use of freedom, the one use of all others for which it was made. It involves the supreme choice, to which all other choices must be subordinate. God in Christ, or self in sin? It is an awful question.

But we still stand on the threshold of the Christian experience. Though the experience of which I have been speaking transcends the ordinary religious experience, yet it may fairly be said to be universal; we must believe that God draws near to every soul, and gives it at least the opportunity to accept his grace. But it is time to hasten on. We will not stop to examine the case where the grace of God through Christ is rejected; we have to do here not with the pathology of religion, but with its normal conditions, where the gift of God is appropriated. So we are brought to

II. The genesis of the distinctively Christian experience and the evidence derived from it.

1. The first point to be noted is the fact that this experience is attained only by the free act of the human will. It is true, the fact is afterward revealed that the act itself is made possible only by divine grace, and that the free-will is but a subordinate factor in a process of which God is the efficient Cause. Neverthe-



less, it is the essential condition of the consummation of that process, and we shall do well to look at the human side before considering the divine agency upon which it is based.

This necessity of the action of the will gives to the Christian experience and the evidence derived from it their distinctive character. In another lecture I shall speak of the will in its philosophical aspects as a source of knowledge. Here we have to do with the practical fact. In this consists the ethical character of the whole process. It is not possible to enter into this sphere except as God has opened it, and he has suspended all upon human acceptance. There is but this one way of salvation.

Moreover, it is to be noted that the motive which leads to the Christian experience cannot be primarily the desire for knowledge and proof. These come as a result when the soul seeks first of all to be redeemed and to submit itself to the divine method of redemption. Mere curiosity, intellectual interest, will never storm the citadel of the new life or secure its evidence of Christian truth. The poor in spirit who will submit themselves to the Saviour's conditions alone have the promise given to them.

2. The act of the human will by which entrance into the realm of Christian experience is secured bears a twofold name in the Bible and systematic divinity. But it is in truth one complex act. It is called *repentance* or *conversion*, and *faith*. These two exercises stand related to each other, I am inclined to think, as choice and volition. According to the Catechism, "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of



God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience." The same admirable symbol defines faith in Jesus Christ as "a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the Gospel." The great and supreme choice by which the new life is initiated on the human side is the turning from self to God, from sin to holiness. The first volition or executive act of the will which issues from this choice is the receiving and resting upon Christ for salvation.<sup>6</sup> But whether this account of the nature and relation of the two be philosophically correct or not, the two are inseparable—the act of repentance and the act of faith; both make up one complex act of the will.

3. This act of repentance and faith is often misunderstood, to the great confusion of clear thought in Christian theology and apologetics. Repentance is confounded with penitence, that sorrow for sin which accompanies the change of heart but is altogether distinct from it. In truth, the two, though so closely associated, are connected with different faculties of the soul. Repentance, as we have just seen, is primarily a matter of the will; penitence, on the contrary, is a matter of the sensibility.

Still greater is the confusion with regard to faith. A very common definition makes it intellectual assent to the truth of certain doctrines. But while faith may involve such assent, this is secondary and subordinate. The rationalistic tendency so manifest in the theology of the last century nowhere comes more prominently to light than in this definition, inherited as it is from the Roman Catholic Church. It reduces the most sa-



cred and spiritual act of the religious life to a matter of intellectual acceptance.<sup>9</sup> Neither is faith a conviction of the reality of what is unseen, though such a conviction is doubtless always present in true faith. The belief of the man of science in the existence of atoms and energy and æther, which he cannot see, may be a kind of faith; but it is not the kind with which we have to do in our analysis of the Christian experience. It resembles the religious faith in so far as both are concerned with a region beyond the discoveries of sense, but that is all; in their essence the two kinds of faith are radically different, in correspondence with the difference of the two spheres to which they belong. Neither is faith the spontaneous and necessary assent of the mind to the first principles of thought or the acceptance of axiomatic truth. Such belief has no place in Christian experience, which is, as the terms imply, a region of empirical, and not of axiomatic, knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

No, Christian faith is a much simpler matter. It is an act of trust in God by which—to recur to the words of the Catechism—“we receive and rest upon” Jesus Christ “alone for salvation.” It is primarily a matter of the will, though, like every moral act, it involves the whole man, intellect and sensibility as well as will. What is essential in it is the trust, the yielding of our will to God’s will, the acceptance of Christ as he is offered to us, the free surrender of ourselves to the drawing of the Father to the Son.

Faith appropriates God’s grace. It has no worth or merit of its own, but is simply instrumental. Not that it is passive; that is excluded by the fact that it is an act of the will. But it is receptive rather than produc-



tive. It gives nothing of its own ; it can claim nothing in its own behalf ; it is utterly dependent upon God.

The object of this faith is God in Christ offering his redemptive grace.<sup>11</sup> Before the awakened sinner is a region of which he has no first-hand knowledge, a sphere of experience into which he has never entered. Yet he knows of it through the objective Gospel and the testimony of Christians, and he has reason to believe that Christ is there, waiting to bestow pardon and eternal life. He hears the divine call and the demand that accompanies it. He feels the strivings of the Spirit in his soul. There is but one way to test the reality of the proffered redemption, and that is by an exercise of the will, by repentance and faith. So the sinful soul obeys the divine summons, and takes the risk. It stretches out into the darkness, and lays hold upon the unseen Christ. It gives itself to him for time and eternity, that he may forgive its sins, and make it holy, and use it in the service of the kingdom, and bring it at last to the heavenly blessedness.

4. The act of will involved in repentance and faith consummated, what is the result? It is one and invariable, as all Christians will testify. He that seeketh, findeth ; he that asketh, receiveth ; to him that knocketh it is opened (Matt. vii. 7, 8). The unknown country is entered, and its reality is revealed by a personal experience. The teachings of the Gospel and the testimony of the believing Church are verified by the facts. The divine call, with its offer and promise, is vindicated.

It will be my task in the remainder of the present lecture to endeavor to describe the new world of experience into which the soul enters by repentance and



faith, and the evidence it furnishes of the truth of Christianity.

(1.) The first effect of the great act of will involved in repentance and faith is the revelation of a new life in the soul. I say the revelation, rather than the beginning, of a new life; for I fully maintain the position commonly taken by theologians, and, I believe, taught in the Scripture, that repentance and faith, though in the truest sense free, are the manifestation of a divine process of regeneration already begun. But while the origin of the new life thus goes back to the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, its disclosure is conditioned upon the human act of will.

This new life involves a radical transformation of the whole man. The strong language employed in the Bible to describe it is not too strong to truly characterize the fact. The change is a "new creation," a "passing from death unto life," a "resurrection," a "new birth." The subject of it has become a "new man;" he possesses a "new heart."<sup>12</sup> It is, in truth, a complete moral and spiritual revolution. Some of our most thoughtful modern theologians do not hesitate to translate the biblical terms into the technical language of philosophy, and to declare that the result of the change is a "new personality," a "new *ego*," with a new self-consciousness.<sup>13</sup> We need, it is true, to be on our guard lest we take these expressions, biblical and theological, with absolute literalness. The bond of personal identity between the old man and the new is not severed. The self is essentially the same, and this is true also of the man's faculties and powers. The subsequent struggle with remaining sin proves to the Christian's sorrow that the "old man" is not by any means



wholly overcome, but exists alongside of the new man, though dethroned from its dominion over the soul and excluded from the centre of the regenerate life. Nevertheless, these strong terms are more than figures of speech. They strive to express the exceeding greatness of a change that, to him who experiences it, is marvellous. Even the outsider sees something of it, and is compelled to confess that it is passing strange.

This inward transformation is the beginning of redemption. It is the breaking of that power of sin which has held the soul captive; the restoration of the soul to its true relation to God, from whom it has been separated and alienated, and under whose displeasure it has rested; the return of the man from false ends to his one true chief end; the rehabilitation of the divine image in him; the opening of the fountain of eternal life. The man has "come to himself" (Luke xv. 17). He is in the way of realizing the "end immanent in his personality."<sup>14</sup>

Let us look at the details of this transformation as they manifest themselves in the principal departments of the human soul.

(a.) A radical transformation has been wrought in the *will*. Here we include the repentance and faith by which the change was effected on the human side; for they, as has already been shown, are not only the condition of the change, but also the *expression* of it. What is most prominent here is the fact realized in repentance, the new choice of a supreme end. In the old sinful state the supreme end is self, or the world in its relation to self. The soul makes itself the centre around which it revolves. It serves and loves the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. i. 25). Moreover, inasmuch



as all a man's subordinate choices and volitions are affected by his supreme choice, all his voluntary acts and states are tainted by this perversion of the will in its highest exercise. Though the man may perform many true and right acts in the sphere of "civil righteousness," yet even these are to a certain extent vitiated by the central disease. But the first experience of the Christian reveals a complete revolution in his moral and spiritual being, and the shaping of his life to entirely new ends and activities. The supreme choice is fixed on God as he manifests himself in Christ. The centre of the soul's movement is no longer the sinful self, but the Being who is the true life of the soul. The kingdom of God, which is the chief end of God and Christ in their redemptive working, has become the chief end of the newborn child of God, and thus not only is his relation to God changed, but also his relation to his fellow-men, who now, in subordination to God, are the objects of his love. Moreover, this new choice involves a resolute turning from sin and purpose of holiness.

The new choice finds expression in repentance. The new volition is expressed in faith. In the sinful state the trust is in self, in the achievements of the sinner's own moral life. In the new life the trust is in Christ. There is a complete submission of the will to him, a taking of him for the Master, a reliance upon his work for justification, a making of his service the business of life. The believer has his all in another, even his Saviour.

But this is not all that is revealed in the transformation of the sinner's will. He discovers, through the repentance and faith which he has freely exercised, that the old sinful inability is gone, and that the



chains which once bound him fast are broken. By the entrance of God's grace into his life the conditions have been supplied which have rendered the free action of the will possible. He is no longer under bondage to sin, but free for the performance of God's will. Not that the sinful nature itself is gone; that is not the case, nor will it be during the remaining earthly life of the Christian. But its power is broken. Sin, whether personal or corporate, is no longer the power that dominates the life. It has been thrust from the centre to the circumference.<sup>19</sup> It is doomed to defeat. It has the sentence of death in itself. The man himself is freed, at least in potency and promise. The power that is working in him has given him back his true self. He is able to fulfil his true purpose.

(b.) The *intellect*, too, has experienced a change. In the unconverted man all the intellectual powers and exercises are affected by sin. Sin is necessarily the source of error; he who does not will rightly cannot think rightly. Even in the region of purely scientific and philosophical thought the disturbing influence of sin manifests itself; prejudices and biases interfere with the processes of intellection. In the practical interests of life the influence is still greater. In moral and religious things the blinding influence of sin is simply incalculable. It is sin that shuts man out from that complete and adequate knowledge of God which he might have through the natural revelation, while it makes the contents of the Gospel to a great extent unintelligible to him before God's Spirit comes to his assistance. The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man (1 Cor. ii. 14), not merely because he has not entered the realm of Christian



experience, but also because his spiritual organ is diseased. The light that is in him is darkness. His eye is evil (Matt. vi. 23). He is blind, and his ears are dull of hearing. Consequently, as Paul says, he *cannot* know the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. ii. 14).

But the regenerated soul has experienced a mighty intellectual transformation. The scales have fallen from the spiritual eyes. There has been an inpouring of new spiritual and moral light. The eye has become single and the whole body is full of light (Matt. vi. 22). A new sphere of knowledge and truth has been opened.<sup>16</sup> Self, God, man, the world, appear in new aspects. The truths of revelation, which before seemed dark and mysterious, now shine in their own light, and appear supremely reasonable. It is true that this change is in part objective, due to the new sphere into which the believer has entered, with its revelation of the Christian realities of which I am to speak later. But this is not the whole. Without the intellectual illumination which is a part of regeneration, this new sphere would be invisible, even supposing it to be entered. It is because the eyes have been opened that the marvelous things are seen. So great is the change in this respect that it seems at first as if a new sense had been acquired, and a certain justification is given to those who speak of a faith-faculty distinct from the other intellectual powers. And yet a calmer and more careful investigation shows that it is only the old powers which have been relieved of their obstructions and quickened and enlarged in their scope.<sup>17</sup>

(c.) Once more, the change is experienced in the *feelings*. The sensibility is that department of the human



mind which is most easily affected by influences from without, and which seems to derive its whole character from the condition of the other parts of man's nature. The feelings are the index of the voluntary and intellectual states, as well as of the instinctive and purely physical. It is not surprising, then, that here the influence of sin is very great. In the unconverted man the impulses and feelings are perverted : selfishness, pride, hatred, fear—all the brood of evil emotions—find a place in the soul. But the change of which we are speaking is nowhere more marked, under ordinary circumstances, than in the sensibility. This most mobile and easily affected part of man, which takes its color and character from the state of his other powers, responds to the new influences. Before it was like "sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;" in the first hours of conversion it is like an exquisite instrument of music upon which a master plays heavenly harmonies. The soul enters a new world of joy and peace, whose light transfigures even the old material world. In the striking words of Jonathan Edwards, "the appearance of everything is altered ; there seems to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast of appearance of divine glory in almost everything. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity, and love, seem to appear in everything ; in the sun, moon, and stars ; in the clouds and blue sky ; in the grass, flowers, trees ; in the water and all nature."<sup>18</sup> The soul goes forth in love to God and Christ. Especially does it cling to the latter with the warmest personal affection. "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (Cant. ii. 16), it declares. There is joy, rest, peace.

(d.) Finally, we mark the change in *conscience*. This is no less wonderful than that which we have



noted elsewhere. The disorder of the unconverted sinner appears in its most concentrated form in his conscience. This witness to the divine law, whose purpose is to keep man in the path of duty and in right relation to God, fails to attain its end, and so is at variance with the other powers. It judges and condemns the sinful soul, declaring its guilt, and testifying to the divine displeasure. There are, it is true, times when its voice is silenced, for sin has the power temporarily to produce this result. But again there are times when conscience awakes to the most urgent activity and turns the inner world into a hell. In that arousing of the sense of sin already mentioned, which is the common antecedent of conversion, when the Spirit of God is working in the soul with the arraignment, the offer, the demand, and the promise of the Gospel, conscience speaks in trumpet tones of condemnation.

But in the great transformation which is revealed when repentance and faith have done their work, conscience also plays its part. Instead of the unrest, the condemnation, the intimations of God's displeasure, and the threatenings of punishment; instead of that experience that is in some respects even worse, the silencing of conscience, there is now satisfaction and peace. Conscience no longer testifies to an angry God, but to a forgiving God, One who has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Ps. ciii. 12). It is no longer arrayed against the other elements of our nature, but points in harmony with them to God and duty.

Here, then, is the beginning of redemption in the soul. I say advisedly, the beginning, for all is indeed



as yet inchoate. The transformation of the supreme choice has not yet brought the subordinate choices and volitions under the control of the new and holy purpose. The saving faith has not yet grown into the mature faith of later Christian life. The renewed intellect is not yet the perfect organ of the regenerate will. The realm of feeling, in which there is such a stirring of new life, is not yet brought into complete subjection to God and Christ. The appeased conscience has still a long struggle with sin before it. But the power of the old life is broken and the new is established. All looks forward to the complete renovation of the man. Eternal life has begun to work in him. The outlines of the divine image, which before were blurred, now appear distinct and sharp-cut in the very centre of his being. It is the beginning of redemption, and contains in it the potency and promise of the complete salvation.<sup>19</sup>

This is the first step in the evidence of Christian experience. The Gospel that was brought home to the soul by the divine call has proved itself true. It has stood the first test. It promised redemption, and here is redemption already initiated; eternal life, and here is eternal life begun; the restoration of the divine image, and that image has already emerged from its obscurity. This is not a matter of inference, not an opinion, but a fact. The change is far too great and radical to be called in question. It impresses itself upon those who view it merely from the outside. The subject of it is filled and thrilled with the certainty of the transformation. To all objectors he says, like the man the Saviour healed, "This one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John ix. 25).



He may not be able to give any scientific justification of his conviction, but he *knows* that it is well-grounded.<sup>20</sup>

We cannot too strongly emphasize the importance of this first element in the evidence. It is the solid foundation upon which all the superstructure of the experimental proof rests.<sup>21</sup> The divine agencies and personalities whose reality our argument aims to prove enter our experience from without; they belong to a transcendent sphere. Our certainty concerning them, like much of our knowledge, must be in part a matter of inference. But the transformation of the spiritual nature of which I have been speaking lies wholly within the sphere of our direct knowledge, in a region with regard to the contents of which there is no possibility of doubt.

(2.) But this is only the first step. The proof is larger and more far-reaching. The Christian cannot stop short with the evidence thus attained; he must proceed to use it in the attainment of new evidence. The fact which presses most strongly upon his attention is that this great change is not natural, that is, that it is not the result of his own agency or of any of the forces, spiritual or physical, operating in the world about him. To explain it by these causes is palpable folly. The persuasions of other Christians cannot have wrought such a transformation. Neither can the truth have done it by its natural influence upon the intellect. It seems at first more to the purpose to say that the man has done it himself, for there is a true sense in which this is actually the case. The repentance and faith, the new choice and volition, upon which the whole hinges, are human acts. They are also free acts; in-



deed, the subject is conscious of never having been more truly free than in this supreme exercise of the will by which he has been transformed from a child of sin into a child of God. Nevertheless, he cannot explain the great experience thus. He has not himself removed the inability which before his conversion prevented him from exercising his freedom. This has been done by a Power external to him, though working within him, which has thus caused this great upheaval in his nature and brought about this wonderful revolution. A great flood of spiritual influence has come down upon the human will and borne it up and carried it along in its powerful current, compared with which it is but a little eddy, though still free—so free that it might have held back the flood. The distinction the theologian makes between regeneration and conversion, the two aspects of the change of heart, is verified by the Christian as he investigates his inner life, and he knows that the determining factor in the work is regeneration. The soul has been taken possession of by a power greater than itself, and its freedom has been “persuaded and enabled”—once more to use a phrase of the Catechism—to make the supreme choice.

And if the change in the will has evidently not been brought about by natural causes, the same is true of the transformation in the other departments of his spiritual being. The enlightened intellect, the renovated sensibility, the quieted conscience, are facts which point to the activity of a Power above nature. The new life is manifestly supernatural. Not without reason do sober-minded theologians like Isaac Watts speak of the “constant miracle of regeneration and convert-



ing grace ; ” <sup>22</sup> for if a miracle is an event in nature for the accomplishment of which natural agencies are insufficient, this wonderful experience may well be thus denominated.

The beginning of redemption in the soul is thus evidently supernatural. <sup>23</sup> The Christian recognizes in it the manifestation of divine grace. Through this experience he is brought directly into contact with God. Of this fact he can stand in no doubt. Here his pre-Christian knowledge of God comes into play, and that connected with the preliminary experience of which mention has been made at an earlier stage in the present lecture. He has known God before in nature and the ordinary religious exercises of his soul ; he has known him still more impressively in the experience that immediately preceded conversion. Now he recognizes in the Power working in regeneration and the new life the same God. The facts can be ascribed to no other source. <sup>24</sup>

(3.) Moreover, this divine Power revealed through the experience of regeneration is not far off but near at hand, not external to the soul but immanent in it. The new consciousness of the converted man reveals to him the fact that the Divine has taken up its abode in his inmost self. In a true sense the regenerate consciousness involves a consciousness of God. That the newly converted Christian would be able rightly to interpret this element in his experience without the help of the external Word, I do not for a moment claim. But with the assistance of that Word he has no difficulty in doing so. He recognizes in this indwelling God that divine personality whom the Bible calls the Holy Spirit. He who is himself by way



of eminence the *Holy* One has turned the soul from sin to the life of holiness. He is the cause of the whole inward transformation ; he is the present fountain from which the new life flows. According to the teachings of the Bible, wherever God comes into contact with his creatures, it is through the Spirit. It is thus that he is immanent in the material world and that he is the life of the sentient creation. It is through the Spirit that he dwells in man in his intellectual, moral, and religious exercises outside of the realm of redemptive grace. But in this closest contact of all which is established by regeneration, he comes into the most intimate union. Through the Spirit God is married to the soul, and the Christian life is no longer a natural life but a life in and of the Spirit.

Here, then, is still another element in the genesis of our evidence, the recognized presence of the Holy Spirit. This is the great and chief evidence of the truth of Christianity, the demonstration of the Spirit, the seal and earnest of the Spirit, of which the New Testament speaks (1 Cor. ii. 4 ; Eph. i. 13 ; 2 Cor. i. 22).

(4.) But still more is involved in this experience. The Spirit bears witness to the reality and power of the glorified Christ. By him the Christian is united to his Lord, and has in himself the witness to his reality and living power.

To understand this fact, let us recall the Gospel teachings respecting the Saviour. Before his death and resurrection he gave notice to his disciples that he should leave them, so far as his bodily presence was concerned ; but at the same time he assured them that he would return to them through the Spirit, by whom he would establish his church, and through whom he and



the Father would abide in the individual Christian and the body of believers (John xiv. 16). By his ascension he withdrew himself from his disciples, in order that he might sit down upon the throne of majesty above, and as the Lord and Ruler of mankind carry on his work of redemption. The first evidence that he was what he claimed to be was the promised outpouring of the Spirit (Acts ii.). This was manifested by the miracles on the day of Pentecost and in the later ministry of his disciples (Acts ii. 33; iv. 10). Every such miracle was at once an evidence of the presence of the Spirit and of the reality and power of Christ's Messiahship. But this demonstration of the Spirit was not confined to these outward evidences. The presence of the Spirit as manifested in the new birth and the new life is the evidence to each believer of the fact that Christ is really upon the throne, working through the Spirit as his agent. This is what the apostle John meant when he said, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John v. 10). As Baxter says, "none but the sacred Redeemer of the world, approved by the Father, and working by his Spirit, could do such works as are done on the souls of all that are truly sanctified." <sup>26</sup>

With the aid of the objective Gospel the Christian has no difficulty in recognizing the living author of regeneration as Jesus the Christ. This is the work the Saviour did when on earth. All his preaching and working had for their object the conversion of souls. This his miracles symbolized and pledged; this his persuasions and influence accomplished. This is the work he promised to do after his ascension: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto



me" (John xii. 32). This was the great object for which his Spirit was to be sent. Forgiveness must be the result of his sacrificial death upon the cross. Eternal life, which is his especial gift, is the life that was manifest in him (1 John i. 2). The bestowal of it upon men is the proof of his Messiahship.

The work that has been wrought in the regenerate soul bears upon it the marks of Christ, and by them we recognize him as its present and ever-living Author. We see in the enlightened intellect, with its new world of spiritual truth, the work of Christ the Prophet, a work that could come from none but him, and which we know as identical with the work he performed on earth. In the quieted conscience we see the efficiency of the great High-Priest, the Lamb of God, who died on Calvary, and taketh away the sins of the world. In the renewed will, turned from sin to God, and made subject to the divine law, we recognize the work of the exalted Messianic King, who evidences his kingship in "subduing us to himself." In the new realm of feeling there are intimations of the work and presence of Christ in all his offices. Moreover, we know him in regeneration as the God-man. In the power he displays we recognize his deity. In the nature of his work we see his perfect manhood. So far as the image of God is restored in the new heart, the presence of the perfect Image, even Jesus the Christ, is manifested. No Christian can for a moment stand in doubt as to Christ's authorship of his new life. It bears upon it all the marks of Christ. And it is not Christ's doctrine or example; it is not the posthumous influence of Christ. It is the power of the ever-living Christ. The presence of the Christ, thus verified, is



a spiritual presence. That goes without saying. It is not a visible or bodily presence, but a presence through the Spirit. But it is none the less a real presence.

The Christian knows himself to be brought thus into union with Christ. This is an essential fact in the experience of the new life. The *unio mystica* is not a figure of speech but a reality. Through the Spirit Christ is united to the soul, and the soul to Christ. And this is not merely a matter of what might be called physical union, that is, of a bond lying out of consciousness, but a personal, consciously recognized, spiritual union, a relation of person to person, spirit to spirit. There is, indeed, a clear recognition of the fact to which reference has just been made, that the humanity of Christ abides in heaven, and that the God-man comes near to us only through the Holy Spirit. But the Christian does not understand this to make the union less, but rather more, real. The Saviour said that it was expedient for him to go away from his disciples (John xvi. 7). He implied that when he should come through the Paraclete, it would be to abide with them in a truer sense than was possible during his earthly life. And this is what the believer realizes in his experience, the presence of Christ in the closest personal union.

In this union with Christ the Christian recognizes the establishment of a new corporate relation, which takes the place of, and is destined entirely to abolish, the old corporate relation to the fallen race. As Adam was his natural head, Christ has become his spiritual head (1 Cor. xv. 45-49). He is bound to Christ by the closest of all ties; and made a member of his body,



an integral part of the new race which he has founded through his redemptive work.

The revelation of the Spirit in the new life of the believer is thus the evidence of the reality and power of the glorified Saviour.<sup>26</sup>

(5.) Moreover, the Spirit testifies to God as the Father; or, to put the same truth into another form, through the Spirit and Christ we are brought to the Father. The Saviour's promise to his disciples was, "If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23). The new-born Christian finds this promise also fulfilled in his experience; through the Spirit he realizes the indwelling of the Father, and the Father is known through the Son. The drawing of the Father to the Son through the Holy Spirit is thus consummated. The believer knows God as he is, not merely as the God whose love broke through clouds of just displeasure in the pre-Christian experience, but also as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have emphasized in our preceding lectures the natural or universal knowledge of God. He reveals himself in the material world as Creator and Governor, and in our spiritual natures as the Father of spirits and the Source of intellectual and moral life. We know him as the personal God, the moral Ruler who speaks in our consciences and governs mankind by his providence. This natural knowledge of God is of the highest importance, if we are to make good the evidence of Christian experience. But how imperfect is this knowledge of God compared with that which comes to us through Christian experience, as we recognize in the Creator the God



and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies (2 Cor. i. 3). We take the Word here again as our guide, but only that we may identify in its portraiture the reality of the Father's character. The Son revealed the Father when he came into the world and lived that wondrous life, at once divine and human. He could say with truth, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also" (John xiv. 9). But this revelation is external and second-hand until the believer, in his own experience, learns to know the Father through the Son. Thus knowing God, he recognizes in the Father the Source and Author of redemption, the eternal Ground of his being, the great End toward which his redeemed life tends.<sup>27</sup>

(6.) The Spirit also bears witness to the forgiveness of sins. This great fact is involved in the quieted conscience, which forms an essential element in the changed heart. But in the initial experience of the Christian life it comes to light not merely as an effect but also as a cause. I wish to dwell upon it somewhat fully, because it involves in it all that is distinctive in the manifestation of the Saviour and the Father through the Spirit. We saw in the last lecture what sin is and what is meant by guilt. As the responsible authors of our own sin we stand defenceless before God's law and God himself. Our relation is a perverted one; we are out of harmony with our spiritual surroundings. Even our material environment is disturbed by sin and has become the source of misery to us. But what is worst in sin and guilt is the disturbance of our relations to God our Father, our soul's true life. We rest under his displeasure. We realize it in the punishment that comes upon us through the



operation of his law. But still more we realize it in our personal relations to him. It separates us from him and shuts us up to an isolated and selfish life. Moreover, it makes reformation impossible. The new life which is essential to salvation is a life in God's favor. It cannot be begun or carried on apart from him, or while we are under his frown. The only hope for our redemption is conditioned upon the possibility that somehow the guilt of sin may be removed. Apart from the Gospel no such hope is vouchsafed us. Natural religion gives no solid ground for belief in the forgiveness of sin; on the contrary, reason alone, dealing with this subject of guilt, seems to declare forgiveness impossible. The justice of God appears to exclude it; for, in spite of all that is said to the contrary, natural theology tells us far more of God's justice than of his mercy. Its dictum is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4); and more than that it cannot tell us.

But in the experience of the new life the believer receives the forgiveness of sin, and knows by the witness of the Spirit that he receives it. He is justified by faith (Rom. v. 1).

This boon comes to him through Christ, as a part of his union with Christ. Because he has become Christ's and Christ has become his, the benefit of Christ's atoning death has become his also. Of this atoning death he knows through the objective Gospel, which declares that by his sacrifice upon the cross the God-man made propitiation for the sins of the world (1 John ii. 2), that is—for it is not my purpose to advance here any theory of the atonement—made it possible and just for God to forgive the sins of men. In the first experi-



ence of the Christian he knows himself to be forgiven, and that not because he deserves it, but wholly on the ground of another's work, even Christ's; not because God is an indulgent Being who passes by sin with easy good-nature, but because Christ has made full atonement. He knows that he is not forgiven that he may sin again and go on in the old life, but because his faith and his conversion involve a new life, and because Christ stands ready to carry him forward in the path of that new life.

The blessing of forgiveness is also known as coming from the Father through an act of justifying grace. Indeed, in this Christ and the Father are one. The consciousness of the Christian involves the full recognition of God's mercy and holiness. It is not the mercy of the Christ as opposed to the justice of the Father, but the mercy and holiness of the Father revealed through the Christ and witnessed in the forgiveness of sin. In this experience of which I am speaking, the great, precious, soul-stirring fact emerges that God is reconciled and has made proclamation of amnesty to his rebellious subjects. The sinner's guilt is gone. Not that he is no longer the responsible author of his sin; that he must always be, and even divine omnipotence could not alter the fact; even in the glories of heaven he will still be the sinner, the unworthy soul that voluntarily set itself in opposition to God and law. In this sense he remains what he was, and must so remain; what has been done cannot be undone. But the forgiveness consists in the fact that God's displeasure, which gave to his guilt its sting, is removed. He has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1). God is reconciled with him



and he with God. The Father's smile is upon him. He knows himself to be in reality, what he has always been by birthright, the Father's son, the heir of God, the joint-heir with Christ of the eternal inheritance (Rom. viii. 16, 17). This sonship, recognized as a present reality, is an essential element in the forgiveness of sins. It is this that gives forgiveness its wonderful sweetness and significance.

Theologians have been wont to describe justification in forensic terms, as a declarative act of God by which a new legal status is effected; and unquestionably their *meaning* is correct. But if we derive our theology not from scholastic treatises but from the experience of the Christian, read in the light of the Bible, we see that this mode of statement fails to do justice to the fact. The believer does not find himself merely in the presence of a Judge who has withdrawn the charges of the law against him; he stands before a Father who has given back his favor and confidence. A forensic judgment is always open to the suspicion of being a legal fiction. There is something external and unreal about it. It remains far-off, abstract, intangible. But the forgiveness or justification of which the Christian consciousness testifies in the first hours of faith is a personal matter. In it God comes near to us, and we, who were afar off from God, are brought near to him. It is not so much a matter of the divine government as of God's personal love. There is no suspicion of a legal fiction about it, because its reality is self-evident. Neither does it shape itself to our thought as something that can be abused, an act of partiality, a permission to go on in sin. It is so connected with Christ, and grows so out of our union with him; it is



so manifestly the result of his worthiness, and wholly not of ours—that we are in no danger of mistaking it or taking an unworthy advantage of it. It is a forgiveness that throws us upon our honor, making it impossible for us to misuse it. It looks forward, too, so unambiguously to a holy life, is so clearly not an end in itself but a means to a higher end, namely, our complete redemption, that it is impossible to regard it as unethical. The prodigal is brought back into the Father's house, the Father's kiss of forgiveness is bestowed upon him, the ring is put upon his finger and the shoes upon his feet, the fatted calf is killed for him, there is music and dancing and great rejoicing—and all that a new life may be possible, with new love to the Father, new obedience and service (Luke xv. 11–32).

(7.) Through the Spirit, who unites the Christian to Christ and the Father, he knows himself to be a member of the new humanity of which Christ is the Head, which constitutes the kingdom of God and finds organized expression in the Christian church. He thus finds himself not alone, but a member of a goodly fellowship. It is in and through this connection with the kingdom and the church that the believer's earthly career is opened to him. The work assigned to him is the Saviour's own work of redemption; the field is his own life and the great world for which Christ died.

(8.) The Spirit is the pledge of the final blessedness. Upon this fact great stress is laid by the New Testament. The Spirit, manifesting himself through the new life, is actually present in the believer's soul. He is thus "the earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. i. 14). By him Christians are "sealed unto the day of redemp-



tion" (Eph. iv. 30). They thus have in themselves the evidence of heavenly triumph. The eternal life which comes from Christ through the Spirit is already at work in their souls, and they know that it will maintain its character as eternal and find its consummation in the blessedness of heaven, as well as in the resurrection of the body, which is the prelude to the entrance into the final state of the righteous. Watts has said: "The spiritual life of a Christian runs into eternity; it is the same divine temper, the same peaceful and holy qualities of mind communicated to the believer here in the days of grace, which shall be fulfilled and perfected in the world of glory."<sup>28</sup>

In conclusion, two remarks. First, the assurance which accompanies this experience is, in normal cases, of the strongest kind. Right or wrong, the Christian believes himself to be right with all his heart and soul and strength and mind. He has tried, and the trial has verified the promise of the Gospel. He knows; he is certain. He has not second-hand but first-hand knowledge. We shall see that the evidence grows stronger as time goes on, and the Christian experience deepens and enlarges; but from the first there is genuine certainty which rests satisfied in its possessions.

In the second place, emphasis is to be laid upon the fact that the starting-point in all our Christian evidence, as it is derived from this initial experience, is the transformation of the inner man from a child of sin to a child of God. It is through this that the Spirit and the other Christian realities manifest themselves. We claim no direct intuition of God. The witness of the Spirit to the Christ and the Father is through the change which they have wrought in us. So the witness



of the Spirit to our sonship is through the actual change from sin to sonship which the Christian has undergone. I shall recur to this subject when we come to treat the objections to the evidence. For the present there is need only to mention it.

Such, then, is the initial experience of the Christian and the evidence which arises from it. In the next lecture we shall consider the enlargement and strengthening of this evidence through the progress of the Christian experience.

I pray God that we may have that insight into the Christian realities which God's Spirit alone can give, that seer's vision into the things unseen and eternal which shall enable us to understand these great spiritual facts and to appreciate their infallible evidence.<sup>29</sup>



## LECTURE V.

### THE GROWTH OF THE EVIDENCE.

THE evidence of Christian experience is, as we have seen, in a true sense complete in the first hours of the new life. A real knowledge, with a corresponding certainty, has been established, and the truth of the Gospel is indubitably confirmed. There are, however, degrees of completeness in knowledge and in the evidence by which knowledge is vindicated. There is a completeness of the germ and a completeness of mature growth. Now Christian experience is a matter of growth. Redemption is indeed established in principle in the regenerated soul, but it is only by a long process that it permeates and takes entire possession of it. The "new man" is at first but a babe in Christ, and must grow up gradually into the perfect manhood. It may readily be seen that the evidence for the truth of Christianity advances *pari passu* with the growth of the experience from which it is derived. In the present lecture I wish to trace the enlargement and strengthening of the proof thus effected.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to remember that the facts to be brought out here are also included in the promise of the Gospel, and that, in order to progress in Christian experience, as to entrance into it, the objective Word and the testimony of the church play their part as es-



stantial means. The Christian does not go on alone, without guidance from without, after he has entered the new sphere, but is still dependent upon his Bible and the aid of his fellow-Christians.

I. We consider first the advancing sanctification and its evidence. We have seen that regeneration and conversion look forward to complete holiness. Redemption is not a gift that is bestowed in its completeness at the start. Rather the gift is an endowment intended to be used, and having no meaning apart from its use. The problem of redemption is the complete restoration of the man, his reforming to the divine image, his renewal in sonship, his entire salvation. The kingdom of God is to be fully re-established in the sinful soul. In regeneration, and the divine forgiveness or justification accompanying it, the moral obstacles on the divine side which stand in the way of the new life are removed, and on the human side the new direction is given to the life. But if this were all, Christianity would lose its high ethical character. Redemption would then be a legal fiction rather than a reality. This, however, is furthest from being the fact. Regeneration and justification imply sanctification and complete redemption as their inseparable sequel. They are only the beginning of salvation, the entrance upon the new road, the initiation of the new career. The Christian becomes such that he may *work out* his salvation (Phil. ii. 12). He is to overcome his sin, to become holy, to be the agent of Christ in the work of his kingdom. The life within him is to be a perennial fountain pouring forth more and more copious streams till it reaches its consummation in the heavenly blessedness (John vii. 38).



The next stage in the evidence of Christian experience is based upon the reality of what is thus prophesied in regeneration, the actual progressive achievement of sanctification. As time goes on the Christian becomes more and more truly the redeemed child of God. The growth and progress which are the mark of all normal experience prove the reality of the life and the truth of the Christian system. Evangelical theology, based as it is upon the teachings of the Scriptures as verified in the practical facts of the Christian life, insists that the proof of the reality of the believer's faith is to be found in the sanctification of his soul. We insist that the same experience is to the believer the evidence of the truth and reality of Christianity.

1. Let us look at the relation in which sanctification stands to regeneration. This has been in part anticipated. The former is the progressive continuation of the latter. Repentance finds its sequel in the permanent choice of God and his kingdom, which dominates the Christian life and persists through all its changes, working for itself ever broader and deeper channels. This supreme choice bears the character of all ultimate choices. Such choices we are constantly forming and persisting in. They are made by an instantaneous exercise of the will, but they abide for years, perhaps for a lifetime. A young man, for example, determines to enter the ministry of Christ. The decision, though it may be the result of long meditation and anxious asking of counsel and abundant prayer, is made in a moment. But it is made for a lifetime, and through all the vicissitudes of later years, the period of education in college and seminary, the active work of the ministry, that choice persists and



shapes the man's whole life.<sup>2</sup> Such a choice is no less free because it is permanent, and thus acquires a certain fixity and invariableness ; rather it is a supreme exercise of freedom, freedom in its highest power, rational, looking into the far future and laying hold upon the highest things. So the initial act of the soul in the Christian life is a free choice, momentarily made, but of permanent validity, and merges thus into the permanent choice, equally free, always present, covering time and eternity, and apprehending the highest end of existence, God in Christ and the kingdom of God. As time goes on, this choice strengthens, grows sturdier, more and more takes possession of the man, and roots itself in character and habit, as it is the nature of all permanent choices to do.

Moreover, faith continues. In the progress, as in the initiation, of the Christian experience faith is the organ by which the realities of this transcendent sphere are apprehended and possessed. The new life is pre-eminently a life of faith. The initial faith, which was considered in the last lecture, has enlarged into a permanent faith.

This faith of the Christian life is not essentially different from the faith of conversion, through which comes the first great endowment of divine blessing. Though active, as all free exercises of the will must be, it is formal and receptive, an instrument that apprehends, a hand that grasps. It takes its color from its contents, and its contents are given it from without. It changes only as those contents change and grow, and as it enlarges to receive them and adapt itself to them. It never grows into independence ; that would be to lose its essential characteristic. Of itself it is



like space without objects in it, or air without light or sound. It never becomes meritorious, but always knows itself to be undeserving. There is a moral character in it undoubtedly, so that there is a sense in which it might be called a good work; but it is not a *meritorious* good work. It is only a vessel, empty and valueless in itself, held up and filled by the bounty of another. Yet, though thus wholly without intrinsic worth, it is the essential condition of all that is of worth in the Christian life. No blessing comes except through the medium of faith. It grasps and abidingly possesses all that was bestowed upon it in the first experience of the Christian—the new redemptive life in the soul, the divine agencies which originated it, the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father, the relation of sonship, and the end toward which redemption tends, the kingdom of God. It is the organ, also, by which the Christian is put into possession of the profounder experiences that bring him into still closer union with these great spiritual realities.

2. The central principle of the new life, in which the supreme choice which dominates it is most fully expressed, is love. This is the converse of faith, the communicative principle, as faith is the receptive.

Faith, as has just been said, receives; it is formal, without contents, looking elsewhere for all that it has. Love, on the contrary, gives; it has contents, though these also in the ultimate analysis may be traced to God; it lays self on the altar a living sacrifice. It is always active, a fountain from which living streams are continually flowing. Love has been defined as the principle according to which a being seeks and finds his own highest good in the good of another. If we



see in the redemptive kingdom of God the highest good as revealed in the divine action, the believer's love corresponds to this definition. So far as it is genuine love, and is not hindered by remaining sin, it "seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt. vi. 33). This is its *summum bonum*. The kingdom of God is the accomplishment of his will in the redemption of the race. The believer's love, therefore, is in this at one with God.

Primarily it is love to God; but it includes love to man and love to self. By taking the kingdom of God as his highest end, the believer is able to bring his whole moral life into unity. The personal finds its true place in subordination to the general. As a fellow-laborer with God, the Christian seeks what God seeks, loves what God loves, does, as far as power and opportunity permit, what God does. Love to his fellow-men is not a mere benevolence. He looks at the world in the light of Christ's redemption, and divides all men into two classes, those who have already been brought by the Saviour's grace into the kingdom, men like himself forgiven and in the way of salvation; and those who are still out of the kingdom, men for whom Christ has died and whom he is laboring by all the enginery of his grace to bring into the kingdom, that they may be forgiven and saved. The former he loves because they are doing God's work, because God loves them, because the special love of the Saviour is manifested to them. He could not love God without loving them. The others he loves because they are those whom God so loved that he sent his only-begotten Son into the world that they might not perish but have everlasting life (John iii. 16), and



because Christ loves them with such tender solicitude that he is bending all his energies to accomplish their salvation. He could not love Christ, or have any understanding of the work of redemption, without loving them. So that his love for his fellow-men thus finds its spring and motive in his love to God, not merely as the God of creation and providence, but especially as the God of redemption.

Then the Christian loves himself. Outside of the life of grace self-love is not to be distinguished from selfishness. But when a man comes to love God and to seek the establishment of his kingdom as the chief end of his living, there emerges to view a self-love that is not only legitimate but obligatory, a recognition of himself as a part of God's kingdom and needful to God in his work. The Christian knows himself to be under obligation to make the most of himself for God, and so long as he loves himself in God there is no danger that he will abuse this love. This is what differences true Christian experience from asceticism. The ascetic, whether heathen or Christian, thinks that he does God service in hating himself, in self-denial for the sake of self-denial, in bodily or mental self-torturing. But true Christianity gives no place to this morbid dealing with self. The Christian knows that he is, in virtue of his relation to God, a being worthy of love.<sup>3</sup>

3. I have spoken of love thus at length because it is so essential to the new life and so characteristic, on the human side, of all that is good in it. It is this that makes man most like to God. It is in a true sense the divine image in man. It is the prime characteristic in the life and work of the Saviour. Now in sanc-



tification love works itself more and more out into the life. More and more it becomes the regnant power. The supreme choice brings the subordinate choices and volitions increasingly under its control.

(1.) There is an increasing holiness of character. Character is rooted in the ultimate choices of the soul, and especially in its supreme choice. Though this choice is present from the first, it is relatively weak and wavering. But more and more as Christian experience advances it becomes strong and powerful. There is an increasing consecration of the whole man to Christ. There is a growing singleness of purpose. There is a strengthening taste for divine things. The heart, the centre of the life, the source of all its activities, the centre of all its powers, is more and more transformed. The great end is pursued with increasing steadiness. The believer realizes his true self with ever greater fulness.

(2.) There is an increasing holiness of act. The Christian life is under law. It recognizes the divine will as expressed in the law as the rule of its procedure. As God is holy, so is the child of God to be holy (Lev. xix. 2). The moral law, which was already known through the natural religious experience, comes with a deeper meaning and higher sanctions. The Christian conscience declares no new law, but reveals in the old law depths which could not have been discovered without the renovating and illuminating power of the new life. It does not relieve the Christian from obligation, but, on the contrary, lays upon him new and stronger obligations, since the old inability is gone and the Christian in his liberty as a child of God is enabled to fulfil the divine will.



And in every true Christian experience there is an advance in that holiness which consists in obedience to the divine law. More and more the will is brought into captivity to Christ. The law of love is increasingly followed. As the process of sanctification advances the law becomes less and less an outward command. It is assimilated, written upon the heart, followed not so much from a sense of duty as from an inclination and loving preference of the inner man.

(3.) There is an advancing ability for Christian service and a growing faithfulness in it. This matter of Christian service, as it shapes itself in the experience of the believer, bears a twofold aspect—general and particular. He knows himself to be called to do a work common to all Christians, the nature and limits of which are clearly indicated in the Christian calling itself. But he also knows that he is called to a particular service, adapted to his peculiar capacities, indicated by his circumstances and opportunities, and laid upon him by the direct call of the Master. In this view of the subject even the ordinary vocation becomes a divine mission. The true Christian comes to understand that God employs in his redemptive work even those agencies which men call secular. And over and above this, the Christian knows himself to be called to work all his own by which the kingdom is advanced in the world.

For this various service the Christian discovers in himself an increasing ability, if his experience be a normal one, and he carries out the vocation thus laid upon him with increasing success. All manhood grows through work. Self-respect, the consciousness of use in the world, the sense of power, come through honest labor. It is the law of our nature that personality is



developed only through exercise. The talent hid in a napkin and buried in the earth must, from the constitution of man and the universe, be taken from its owner and given to others. It is by giving his life in the free service of God and his kingdom that the Christian finds his life. As he labors for Christ his Christian personality grows. All his powers become enlarged, his consciousness is filled with a richer content, his sense of Christian self-respect and dignity is increased. With continued and faithful service comes new ability for service, and with it new opportunities. Moreover, this consciousness of increasing power and usefulness is accompanied by a consciousness of increasing growth in grace. Service reacts on character and accelerates the work of sanctification. The man in whom eternal life is stirring knows himself to be enlarging on every side. In the spiritual as in the natural realm life generates life.

(4.) There is an enlarging knowledge and wisdom. One of the first effects of the great change of regeneration was to bring light into the sphere of the intellect. Sanctification progressively affects this important department of the human mind. The path of the just, as it opens up in Christian experience, is a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Prov. iv. 18). The intellect is always profoundly affected by the state of the will. This is pre-eminently the case in the spiritual sphere. As the will is progressively brought into subjection to Christ and made a will of love the eyes of the understanding are increasingly opened. As the organ of knowledge is clarified there is a growing insight into spiritual things. The truths of natural religion open up to the believer in



new and wonderful meanings. The law of God reveals to him in ever fuller measure the nature of human obligation. He comes into a profounder knowledge of himself. He learns more and more to understand the Word and to use it for his needs. In the presence of the Christian realities he gathers that increasing knowledge of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of God, of which I am to speak a little later. He learns that practical wisdom that finds its exercise in the duties of the Christian life.

4. I have spoken thus far only of the positive side of sanctification. But this survey would be incomplete were the negative side omitted. The Christian life in its growth is not an unimpeded evolution. It is a growth attained only through conflict. The effect of regeneration was to establish the new man in the centre of the believer's life and to thrust the old man out from the citadel of the spiritual nature. But the old life, though thus expelled from its place and broken in its power, was not by any means destroyed. It remained, and the Christian life on earth was ever after a warfare. It is true there are Christians who declare that this conflict is often brought to an end during the earthly life by the entire triumph of the new man, who attains to perfect holiness through an act of faith similar to that by which at regeneration he entered into the possession of the new life. But Christian experience, when unhampered by a theological theory, gives no such verdict. It declares that the contest with remaining sin lasts through the earthly life. Indeed, those Christians who claim to have attained sinless perfection prove, when their doctrine is examined, to have only reached a standard of perfection erected by themselves and lower



than the perfect standard of the law of God. The normal Christian experience is to the end a warfare, a deadly struggle with remaining sin.

In this contest there are fluctuations. There are times when the old nature temporarily gets the upper-hand. There are falls and failures. There are times when the light of the new life is darkened and the clouds settle down thick upon the soul.

But it is characteristic of the genuine Christian experience that it is, on the whole and progressively, a triumph. There may be eddies in the stream, where the current flows backward, but the main sweep of the stream is forward. Sin is overcome and holiness advances. The old man, though not yet utterly destroyed, becomes more and more a conquered enemy, powerless for harm. The periodical revivals of his power leave him always weaker. He carries around in him the sentence of death.

It is to be noted that not only is the continuance of the struggle between the new man and the old characteristic of genuine Christian experience, but also that it is the condition of advance in sanctification. That discipline which is so important an element in the Christian life is thus attained. It is needful that the soldier of Christ should endure hardness. It is thus that he becomes strong.

5. The Christian has thus in the advancing sanctification of his nature the indubitable evidence that the redemption promised by the Gospel is real. The life which manifested itself so strikingly in regeneration has proved its reality by its growth. The seed which was sown in that great primal change has shown by its germination and development that it was living. The



end immanent in the human personality is being progressively attained. The man who came to himself when he gave his heart to God and accepted the Christian vocation finds himself realizing the highest possibilities of his nature. The restored image of God, which at first was only traced in outline, is now being filled up in its details. Thus the proof that was strong in the first hours of the new life gathers strength as the process advances. "It comes to pass," says Dr. Watts, "that when Christians have grown to a good degree of strength in faith, and great measures of holiness in this world, all the temptations that they meet with to turn them aside from the doctrines of Christ are esteemed but as straw and stubble; they cannot move nor stir them from the faith that is in Jesus, because the evidence hath grown strong with years; and as they have attended long upon the ministration of this Gospel they have found more and more of this eternal life wrought in their hearts."<sup>4</sup> What is true of all who have progressed far in holiness is measurably true of every Christian who has been growing in grace. The increasing life within is an irrefutable evidence of the reality and truth of the Christianity which gives rise to it.

II. But this is not all. The process of sanctification by which the Christian's redemption is carried forward to completion furnishes an increasing knowledge and evidence of the reality of the divine Causes that are at work.

1. There could be no doubt at first that the work was divine, but the evidence that this is the case grows stronger and more undeniable. No fact is pressed more strongly upon the believer's attention than that of his entire dependence upon a higher Power for his



sanctification. More and more clearly he sees that the progressive redemption is not his own work. There is, indeed, a true sense in which he is the author of it. It is accomplished through his will, which in choice and act is constantly active in the new life. But while he works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, he is conscious that a higher Power is working in him to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. ii. 12, 13). His will is merely the medium of a divine Will. That receptiveness of faith of which I have spoken points to the true nature of the Christian life; it is a divine gift, the work of divine hands, not only in its origin but also in all its progress. It never ceases to be a wonder; it is, to repeat the phrase of Watts quoted in the last lecture, the "constant miracle" of divine grace.<sup>5</sup> The effect of a true Christian experience, as it advances from stage to stage in its development, is not to make the subject regard himself as the author of the great work that is going on within; on the contrary, he grows constantly more humble and self-distrustful, and more convinced that all his sufficiency is from God. His declaration is, "Without him I can do nothing" (John xv. 5); "Nevertheless I live, yet not I" (Gal. ii. 20). He traces his failures and falls to his forgetfulness of his dependence upon the divine help. He sees the greatest advancement just when he gives himself up most entirely to be moulded by God. He perceives that while he is truly free in the Christian life, yet the use of his freedom consists chiefly in keeping himself in constant *rappor*t with the divine life working in him, or rather, in letting that life maintain its contact with him and play freely through him.



In this consists the great difference between true Christian experience and every other form of religion that lays claim to the Christian name. The moralism which makes a man his own Saviour is wholly alien to the Christianity which makes the man the undeserving recipient of a divine redemption. The pantheistic religion which deifies man, and thus makes his moral and spiritual exercises divine because human, does no better. Both utterly fail to bring the soul into that contact with God which is the foundation of the evidence I am endeavoring to expound. They leave it self-satisfied, isolated, separated from God. Christianity proves its truth by bringing the soul more and more into contact with the redemptive power of God.

2. But the progressive redemption does not merely reveal the fact that a divine Power is at work ; it also discloses more and more fully the nature of that Power. As the Christian comes increasingly to understand the great change that is going on within him, more and more, by the help of the guiding and interpreting Word and the experience of his fellow-Christians, is he enabled to discover the nature and character of the divine Being who is the Author of the change, and thus does the evidence for the truth of the Gospel become ever stronger. The first effect of the redemption wrought by God in the soul is, as we saw in the last lecture, to reveal him in his trinitarian character as Spirit, Christ, and Father. We may now say that the result of the advancing experience is to make this more and more certain and distinct. The Christian life is a progressive experience of the reality and power of God in the threefold distinction of Father, Christ, and Spirit. These are the fixed points in the inner world of the



Christian, the sun and stars of his spiritual firmament. As the mists and clouds produced by sin clear away, these realities shine out in their intrinsic radiance. The Christian would as soon think of doubting his own existence as of calling in question the verity of these facts.

We begin, as before, with the Holy Spirit. He is pre-eminently the immanent God. He is the divine life as it comes directly in contact with the soul and makes it God's dwelling-place. It is his causal efficiency which we recognize immediately in the effect. The fact already emphasized, that the true causality in the new life is not human but divine, finds its most direct illustration in the Christian's experience of the presence and power of the Spirit. Whenever, in the investigation of sanctification, we impinge upon the divine authorship of the process, we are brought into contact with the Holy Spirit. In all the stirrings of his new life the Christian recognizes this divine source of power. More and more he is brought to realize his utter dependence upon this inward abiding Personality. This is the fountain from which all that is good in him flows. This is the source from which come all right and holy impulses. This is the Helper by whose guidance he is directed.

It is hard to put into words all that belongs to this profound experience, to show how the Christian, as the life within progresses, becomes more and more the man of the Spirit, and more and more knows himself to be such. It is one of those facts which we fail to describe aright on account of their very simplicity and their fundamental character. Yet all Christians know what is meant, for all have the experience on which it rests.



Just as the self-trust of unscriptural forms of Christianity leads to a denial of its truly divine basis, so it leads to a denial of the truth and reality of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. A man cannot in any true sense hold this doctrine who has not had, and is not progressively having, the experience that underlies it. The man who has the experience cannot doubt the truth of the doctrine. Indeed, it is not a doctrine to him but a fact; he knows that the Holy Spirit is the source of all his religious life. Accordingly, as the years of Christian experience advance, the believer is more and more profoundly possessed with the conviction of the reality and power of this indwelling divine Personality.

This wonderful experience is best described in scriptural terms. The believer recognizes in it what the Word has declared to be the relation of the Christian to the Spirit. He lives and walks by the Spirit (Gal. v. 25). The Spirit dwells in him (Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 16). He is led by the Spirit (Rom. viii. 14). He is sanctified by the Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 11; 1 Pet. i. 2). He is strengthened with power through the Spirit in his inner man (Eph. iii. 16). By the Spirit he mortifies the deeds of the body (Rom. viii. 13). The graces of the Christian life—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance—are fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). By the Spirit the Christian is increasingly capacitated for the special duties of his Christian calling, so that whatever gifts of service he possesses are to be regarded as *charismata* of the Spirit (Rom. xii. 3-8; 1 Cor. xii. 4-13). When the Christian prays, he is borne up upon a flood of spiritual life which he recognizes as the Spirit helping his infirmities (Rom. viii. 26, 27). The



Spirit is the source of his increasing spiritual knowledge and illumination (1 John ii. 20). As he reads his Bible he recognizes in it the inspiration of the same Spirit who is guiding him into the truth. But while dependent upon the teachings of Christ as they are recorded in the New Testament, the Christian finds them confirmed by the Spirit within, and recognizes in this Spirit, whom he knows to be the Spirit of Christ, a source, in a true sense independent, of knowledge and truth. Milton represents the Saviour as saying,

“God hath now sent his living oracle  
Into the world to teach his final will,  
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell  
In pious hearts, an inward oracle  
To all truth requisite for men to know.”<sup>6</sup>

By this “inward oracle” the Christian is guided and enlightened. Finally, through the Spirit the Christian waits by faith for the hope of righteousness (Gal. v. 5). In a word, in all the advancing work of sanctification he is the spiritual man (1 Cor. ii. 15).<sup>7</sup>

This indwelling of the Spirit, more and more fully recognized by the Christian in the process of sanctification, is the great proof of the truth of Christianity. The believer has “the witness in himself” (1 John v. 10).

3. But there is, also, an increasing knowledge of Christ and evidence of his living reality and power involved in Christian experience. This knowledge and evidence comes to us through the Spirit. We saw in the last lecture<sup>8</sup> how the Spirit, as manifested in the new life, is the great proof that Christ is upon the



throne, and the means by which the believer is united to him. In the progress of his experience the believer finds this evidence growing constantly stronger and more convincing. We saw that the initial experience of the Christian life, the regeneration of the soul, bore upon it the marks of Christ's efficiency, his deity and his humanity, his prophetic, priestly, and kingly working. The same sure manifestations of the Saviour's power and grace appear with increasing distinctness in the progress of sanctification. It is not the power of Christ's doctrine which we recognize in it but the power of the living Christ. It is not his example but his present grace that more and more transforms the Christian. The redemption that is at work in the soul bears the marks of Christ's handiwork upon it. It is truly a Christ-life. Especially is it the work of the Saviour, who died for our sins upon the cross and wrought for us a perfect atonement. He who sits upon the throne and rules as the exalted King is also the Lamb that was slain. His work is redemptive. The new life is a life that in all its stages declares to us the blood of Christ shed for our salvation. The divine image that is being more and more completely restored is the image of Christ. Christ is being formed within ; he is the model after which the new manhood is being patterned. Baxter finely says, "If the devil, or any seducer, would draw you to doubt whether there be indeed a Christ or not, and whether he did rise again, and be now living, what an excellent advantage is it against this temptation, when you can repair to your own hearts, and there find a Christ within you—I mean his Spirit possessing you, and ruling you for him ; and his very nature and image



in you, and such workings of his upon you, which none can imitate." 9

• The Christian learns to recognize with increasing familiarity the hand that is moulding him.<sup>10</sup> Here again he uses the objective Gospel. It is the Christ on earth, the God-man in his humiliation, from whom he learns to know the Christ upon the throne. But the process is not one of mere imagination, by which the qualities of the historical Christ are transferred to an abstract and unreal Being. Rather there is a recognition of those qualities which are described in the Word in the real Being revealed through the work of the Spirit. This last is the portrait by which we identify the original.<sup>11</sup> Because we see in our souls works like those Christ performed on earth, only in some respects greater and more wonderful, we know that it is Christ who is operating upon us through his Spirit. To quote once more the words of Baxter : " O, saith the sanctified soul, have I felt Christ relieving me in my lost condition, binding up my broken heart, delivering me from my captivity, reconciling me to God, and bringing me with boldness into his presence whom I had offended, and saving me from God's wrath, and law, and my own conscience ; and now, after all this, shall I doubt whether there be a Christ, or whether he be alive ! Have I felt him new creating me, and making all things new to me, so strangely opening my darkened eyes, and bringing me from darkness into his marvelous light, and from the power of Satan to God ; binding the strong man, and casting him out, and bringing down the strongest holds in my soul ; and yet I shall question whether there be a Christ or not ? Hath he made me love the things which I hated, and hate that which



I loved? Hath he given me such a taste of the powers of the world to come, and possessed me with the hopes of glory with himself, and given me a treasure and portion in God, and set my heart where my treasure is, and caused me in some measure to have my conversation in heaven; and yet shall I doubt again whether he be the Christ?"<sup>12</sup>

In the same way the Christian becomes increasingly certain of his union with Christ through the Spirit. If the old life was a selfish and isolated one, the new, as has been shown, is a dependent one, and just as fast as sin is driven out and holiness established the dependence increases. The source of life upon which the Christian depends is primarily the Spirit, but this is the Spirit of the glorified Saviour and unites us with him. More and more fully we come to see that it is Christ who is our life, and that our true life is hid with him. The believer is not a mere individual, but a member of Christ, a branch of the true Vine, united with him in the closest and most intimate relations. The new manhood is rooted in the life of the Saviour. This union, when first established, was the ground of the divine forgiveness of sin; because the sinner had become one with the Saviour, the atoning sacrifice of the latter could be taken as if it were the sinner's own. In the sequel of the new life the union is the ground of sanctification; the righteousness of Christ is imparted to the believer as an inherent righteousness through the Spirit.

At first the Christian can have only a vague and unsatisfactory knowledge of the marvelous reality involved in his connection with Christ. From the nature of the case the "mystic union" has a mysterious



element in it. It can never be fully comprehended. But it is more and more fully apprehended. Taken merely as an hypothesis propounded by the Word, there would still be so much in the experience of the Christian which it would explain that there would be good reason for accepting it as true. But the believer comes to know it as far more than a verified hypothesis. He recognizes it as a fact that becomes increasingly manifest as the divine redemption is progressively wrought out within.

But more than this: there is an increasing personal knowledge of the Saviour. The relation between the Christian and his Master is one of communion and fellowship. It is not one-sided but reciprocal. The Christ who—to use Paul's language—dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. iii. 17) is there, through the mediation of the Spirit, as a personal presence, making himself known by acts and influences which are the signs of a personal communication. I shall recur to this subject later, when speaking of the life of communion with God. Here let it suffice to assert the fact as an integral part of the Christian's experience, and to insist that it is a matter of increasing knowledge.

This increasing knowledge of the Christ is the central fact in the experience of which we are speaking. So evident is this in the ordinary ongoings of the renewed soul that Christians are apt to overlook the intermediate stages and to speak of their faith and new life as immediately attached to Christ.<sup>13</sup> And in a sense they are right; for although we know the glorified Saviour only through his Spirit, and the Spirit only through the redemption wrought in the soul, yet these intermediate agencies do not separate, but rather



unite the Christian more closely to Christ. Faith clings with ever closer grasp to the God-man, who reveals God, and yet is man in all the intimacy and nearness of human brotherhood, our Atoner, our Mediator with God, our Master, our Example. He is not a mere ideal, such as Kant has described in his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, a Christ who has no actual and personal existence, whose very earthly existence as described in the Gospel is a matter of indifference; but a present Christ, with whom the believer is united in a fellowship that is constantly becoming closer, and that grows out of a union in the depths of his spiritual being more intimate than any physical bond. This Christ upon the throne, who is ruling the whole world and carrying on the work of his kingdom on the world-wide scale; this Christ, from whom are all things and to whom are all things, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the goal, is the believer's nearest friend and most constant companion. He satisfies the double need of our souls, for communion with the Absolute and for the realization of that communion through humanity. In him the believer finds his Head, his completion; the perfection of his personality is in Christ:

“ Christ, of all his hopes the Ground;  
Christ, the Spring of all his joy.”

More and more, Christ becomes his all in all. As he looks forward to the other world Christ fills the horizon.

4. Moreover, the Christian comes increasingly to know the Father. To him, as we have seen, the Spir-



it bears witness, as well as to the Christ, and the Father is known through the Son. We have seen also that to know God outside of the sphere of redemption is not to know him in the deeper meaning of the term Father. It is only through the Son that we know the Father (Matt. xi. 27). And as the Christian more and more fully learns of Christ through the Spirit, the reality and character of the Father dawn upon him with growing clearness. It is when we have begun to realize through the experience of the Christian life that God is love (1 John iv. 8), that we get an insight into this deepest depth of religious truth. To know that in its centre, in its inmost heart, the Deity is gracious and full of compassion, though holy and just, this is to know the Father. And so this knowledge generally lags behind the rest. It is the pure in heart who see God (Matt. v. 8), and only increasing sanctification affords this knowledge. It is God as Father whose face is hid from us, who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 Tim. vi. 16). At the best we shall see him in the present state as in a mirror darkly (1 Cor. xiii. 12). Only in the other world, when sanctification is complete, shall we see him face to face and know him even as we are known (*ibid.*). I know the view of popular theology is different. According to it, the knowledge of the Father is the first and easiest part of Christian experience, while that of the Spirit is the hardest. But experience itself puts it the other way, and it is confirmed by the Word.

The Spirit's witness to the believer's sonship, which continues throughout the Christian life and partakes of its growth and progress, is connected with an in-



creasing knowledge of God the Father. The objective basis of this witness is, as has been noticed, the work wrought by God in the soul.<sup>14</sup> Sanctification, as it carries forward the process of redemption and imprints the divine image more clearly upon the soul, gives ever stronger expression to the Spirit's testimony. The great evidence of sonship is likeness to God. But sonship is correlative to Fatherhood. It is through Christ as the Son that we learn to know the Father. It is through the growing experience of sonship that we gain that knowledge of Christ which brings us to the true knowledge of the Father. When we find the likeness of Christ more and more formed within us, we look beyond it and beyond Christ to a Fatherhood in which this sonship has its deepest root, a Love that is absolute, that combines in it infinite holiness and infinite mercy and compassion, and finds its deepest joy in self-sacrifice.

Before leaving this branch of our subject let me say a word respecting the trinitarian character of the Christian's experience. In the description I have given in this and the preceding lecture of that knowledge of God as Father, Christ, and Spirit which is involved in the new life, I have not meant to imply that it furnishes us with the doctrine of the Trinity in the formal shape given to it in our theological systems. The doctrine is the result of Christian thought reflecting upon the facts of Christianity as given in the objective revelation and verified by the Christian consciousness, and giving expression to them in a philosophical form. All that I claim is that the materials are present in Christian experience, and that the Christian knows himself, with evidence that completely satisfies his



heart and his intellect, to be in contact with the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Christ. I think, also, the great proof of the reasonableness of this doctrine is the fact that it is verified, so far as its great outlines are concerned, in Christian experience. This experience is trinitarian; the God who is known in it is known under the threefold personal form of Father, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

In saying this I do not at all undervalue the philosophical proof of this doctrine, which endeavors to demonstrate the reality of the Trinity from the necessities of the divine self-consciousness. But it seems to me that this philosophical demonstration must always remain barren unless it is brought into relation to the proof from the experience of the Christian.<sup>15</sup>

In similar language I might speak of the knowledge of the Saviour's person which comes to us through the Christian consciousness. It is not the theological doctrine but only the real basis of that doctrine.

III. But I pass to speak of the evidence derived from the communion of the Christian with God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. His relation to the sacred Three is a personal one of spirit to spirit in rational communion and fellowship. He is not mixed with them in any magical way. He does not lose his identity in God and Christ. His union with them is not physical. It is a conscious, personal union—mutual, reciprocal—in which there is action and reaction, the divine meeting the human, and the human the divine, as two souls meet in the converse of friendship and love. Here lies the deepest meaning of the "mystical union." For there is a true Christian mysticism. There is a sphere where the Father reveals himself as he does not to the world.



This is the great source of the Christian's growing strength and joyousness and courage amid all the trials and difficulties and dangers and oppositions of life. When the world outside grows unendurable he can withdraw into himself and find converse and comfort and counsel. He is God's friend, his confidant; he shares the counsels of God.

In this life of communion with God the believer is made increasingly a partaker of eternal life. Thus the Saviour himself defined it: "This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). It is life, because God is the soul's true good, because his favor is life, because the spirit attains its highest function in this fellowship with God and Christ through the Spirit. It is eternal, because it is a foretaste of the endless blessedness with God and Christ in the heavenly world.

In this communion with God into which the Christian more and more fully enters there is nothing miraculous. It is not such a communion as the prophets and apostles had in the days of supernatural revelation, when they were made the recipients of a truth beyond the power of the human soul in its ordinary exercises to attain. Though we know but little of the nature of this inspiration, we are certain that it transcended the ordinary and natural. The communion of which I am speaking is not such an objective contact and converse that we could speak of it as if it carried with it the spiritual equivalents of visible presence or audible voice. The Christian knows that he stands on a lower level of communion with God than that which he is to attain in the other world. As



was remarked a moment ago, he sees not yet "face to face," but "in a mirror darkly" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). He does not see God as the pure in heart are to do in the "beatific vision" (Matt. v. 8).

This communion conforms to the ordinary laws of the soul's action. The fact that it is difficult to analyze and describe does not make the Christian less certain of its reality. He knows, and knows it with constantly increasing certainty, that a higher, more than natural or human power, even the power of Father, Son, and Spirit, has laid hold of him and holds him fast, touching and stimulating and inspiring his whole nature,—will, intellect, and feeling. He knows that this power is personal and conscious, even as he knows himself personal and conscious. It is in the sphere of personality that the contact takes place, and its actions and reactions are all personal and conscious. In our intercourse with our fellow-men the spiritual in us is stirred and quickened. In a higher degree this takes place in our intercourse with the Father and Christ through the Holy Spirit. The believer is never more himself than when he is thus conversant with God—walking with him, to use the expressive phrase of the Bible. His will meets a higher, holier, more loving Will than his own, and meets it only to submit itself in a joyous self-abnegation which is the truest freedom. His intellect is illuminated by the radiance of a higher Intellect, shining upon it in all the self-evidence of perfect truth. His sensibility is touched in all its range and infinite variety, as the keyboard of some great organ is manipulated by the skilful musician, who calls forth from it exquisite melody. And this is, as I have said, in-



creasingly the case, so that more and more this inner life of fellowship with God becomes the real and true part of the man's life, which gives its meaning to his life in the world and among his fellow-men.

This life of communion with God receives its best illustration from that form and function of it which is most characteristic of Christian experience, namely, prayer. The poet speaks of the

"Still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise."<sup>16</sup>

But viewed from the stand-point of a sober Christian life which claims no mystic element beyond what is taught on every page of the Bible, these offices, so far from being imperfect, are the highest expression of the believer's communion with God. It is indeed true that prayer is not confined to Christianity but is the utterance of man's religious nature everywhere, the evidence that he knows himself dependent upon God and always in his presence. The veriest heathen, despite the imperfection of his religion, with its inadequate and perverted conceptions of God, prays, holding up imploring hands to a Being higher than himself on whom his welfare and happiness are conditioned. But only in Christianity do we find prayer in its highest potency and truest meaning. Take the case of a Christian who lives the hidden life with any degree of fullness and intimacy, and you find prayer in a form of which the heathen or the devotee of natural religion has but little idea. It aims, indeed, at particular blessings to be obtained from God. But it does far more than that. It brings the believer into the most intimate fellowship with the Father, the Christ, and



the Holy Spirit. It is connected most closely with the whole work of redemption, and bears everywhere the redemptive character.

It is prayer to the Father as the God of grace, in the name of Jesus Christ and on the ground of his redemptive work, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. It has its springs in God's gracious forgiveness. It is the expression of the filial spirit. It is an element in the sanctifying process by which the believer is matured to the perfect manhood in Christ Jesus.

All prayer implies the answering activity of God. Even the heathen praying to his idol believes that he is heard, and that his prayer will be answered by the superhuman Power of which the idol is the symbol and the vehicle. He would think it folly to pray if he supposed, as some who claim the Christian name do, that prayer is a one-sided operation, a "mere dumb-bell exercise," as Horace Bushnell called this perversion of it.<sup>17</sup> He has no doubt that he has come into a relation in which reciprocal influences are at work.

But the prayer of the Christian means more than this. He knows upon increasing and ever-strengthening evidence that he is enwrapped in the divine life and made a part of the divine activity. He finds himself a factor in God's work of redemption, a working power in God's kingdom of grace. His communion with God partakes of this character. "No longer," said the Saviour to his disciples, "do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you" (John xv. 15).

The believer is in such a relation of confidence and



intimacy with God, knowing himself to be a fellow-worker with him in the great cause. He knows the Holy Spirit to be at work in the depths of his own nature, inditing his petitions, helping his infirmities when he knows not what he should pray for as he ought (Rom. viii. 26, 27). His own freedom, never so truly free as when thus involved in the movement of the divine life, to which it gladly and with full consciousness submits itself, is borne along on the deep, strong tide of the Spirit's return to God, and his prayer is a part of that great movement of the world to God through the redemptive activity of the Spirit. He knows, also, that his prayer is made through the Christ. The living Saviour, seated upon the throne, is his Advocate (1 John ii. 1), who makes continual intercession for him (Rom. viii. 34), and through him he finds access to the mercy-seat of the Most High (Eph. ii. 18).

And so his prayer comes to the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. i. 3); and in God's condescending answer and loving gifts of grace the circle of communion is complete.

This life of prayer is the Christian's secret, which he finds it hard to utter, it is so different from all other experiences, so profound and sacred, yet so real. How utterly opposed to those mistaken views of prayer which are held by many who call themselves Christians, and perhaps are so in spite of their erroneous opinions! The "reflex influence!" what a motive for prayer! how meaningless! how absurd! No human being, after he has found out the secret and convinced himself that there is nothing more in prayer, will ever



think of pursuing it. So, too, how inadequate, not to say perverted, is the view which makes prayer a sort of magic incantation by which men can extort certain blessings from God, whether he thinks it wise to bestow them or not. Physical blessings, healings of disease, selfish gratification, physical or spiritual—as if these things were all that prayer is good for, and as if it meant no more than these! I say this, not meaning to deny that we have a right to pray for personal blessings, both temporal and spiritual, or that God answers such prayers according to the asking, when he sees it to be wise so to do. My only contention is that to confine prayer to this, and to suppose it to be a means of laying constraint upon the divine will, is to miss what is most essential to it.

The Christian has increasing evidence of the truth of Christianity through answers to prayer. Too strong emphasis cannot be laid upon this point. It is here that in the case of the ordinary believer some of the most convincing proof for the reality of Christianity is furnished. He asks and he receives, and through the connection between the asking and receiving obtains indubitable evidence.

Let us look first at the spiritual blessings which come in answer to prayer. That these are not the result of “reflex influence” has been already asserted, and it follows from their nature. The spiritual effects which follow prayer are not explicable through human agency. They are a part of that sanctification which we have seen to be divine. The Christian is compelled by the most painful experience to distinguish sharply between the results of his own self-trust and the results of prayer. He attempts the



work of spiritual reformation in his own strength, and he fails utterly. Over and over again—for it is long before the Christian learns this lesson—he is compelled to bewail his folly in building his house upon the sand of his own good resolutions and efforts. The easily-besetting sin which he would overcome proves too strong, the evil habit too deeply rooted, for such treatment. But it is altogether different when he prays the effectual fervent prayer of faith. Then he lays hold upon divine power and this effects the result that his own strength tried in vain to accomplish. He cannot doubt the reality of the response that comes to his cry. The strength of Christ is made perfect in his weakness (2 Cor. xii. 9). Thus the work of sanctification goes on. Remaining sin is more and more overcome. The habit of prayer becomes more a part of the man's life, and the spiritual results of it more undeniable.

But there are other answers to prayer that are not confined to the inner life, but extend to the world without. These are numerous and striking, and possess strong evidential force. I do not refer merely to the prayers which aim at physical blessings, though they are not by any means to be excluded ; but to all prayers the answers to which involve manifest providential results in the external world. To this class belong the prayers for guidance in matters of Christian duty. The answer comes not alone through inward impressions. Indeed, as regards these impressions, the sober, cautious Christian is not inclined to accept them without deliberate and scrupulous investigation. There are providential indications, as we call them, coming to us from without, upon which we lay the chief stress in



our decisions. What Christian has not, over and over again, been guided by such indications, and what Christian doubts that they are real answers to prayer?

To the same category belong our prayers for matters involving the spiritual or material well-being of others. As the Christian life advances, the believer gathers an increasing catalogue of these answers, which serve to strengthen his faith and to give him confidence in the reality and power of the great spiritual instrument God has placed in his hands. A more extensive and profounder experience also teaches the Christian better to understand the divine methods in dealing with prayer, so that the cases of apparent failure on God's part do not perplex him. For as he comes more and more into intimacy with God, he learns why it is morally impossible for God to grant many things that are asked of him, though at the same time he never leaves the earnest and sincere requests of his children unregarded.

Closely connected with the evidence arising from God's providential working in answer to prayer is that which is derived from the divine providence in its relation to the events of the believer's life in the world. The latter comes increasingly to realize that the heavenly Father has taken him up into the work of the kingdom in such a way as to make his personal providence to him as an individual a part of the providence of grace which superintends the interests of the kingdom. For this reason all things work together for good to him that loves God. They cannot but do so, since the Christian's good is involved in the *summum bonum*, the kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of redemption through Christ. In the progress of Christian experience this fact is realized more and more



completely and understandingly. The child of God is able to see in all God's dealings with him a divine education, fitting him for service in earth and heaven, and causing him to grow in the grace as he grows in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. iii. 18). He comes to see that there is a divine meaning in all that from a lower stand-point seems evil. He discovers that his worst sufferings are in reality "growing pains," the necessary condition of his preparation for the ends God has in view for him. Thus he is brought into a still closer intimacy with God and Christ. He sees the same process fulfilled in himself that was fulfilled in the sinless Saviour, when he was made perfect by suffering (Phil. iii. 10; Heb. ii. 10). So he comes to see life in wholly new meanings. He reads God's purpose from his providence as a message written in visible characters. There is thus furnished to him an evidence of the truth of the Christian faith possessing very great weight, and one that is continually growing in force.

IV. A similar evidence is derived from the believer's advancing knowledge of God's work in the world. The kingdom of God is to him the key to all history and all passing events. He knows the kingdom of God in his own experience, and he is thus able to recognize its workings in the world without. He knows that the Saviour is at the helm of the universe, making all things conspire for the advancement of his redemptive work. The Christian is in a true sense a prophet. He sees things that other men cannot see. He knows the outcome of human history. God's purpose has been revealed to him, and he is certain that it is being successfully carried out. He looks upon the



hurrying current of time, as it has flowed on since the creation, and he knows whither it is tending and through what regions it is to pass before it empties into the eternal sea. He sees the evolution of the natural world, the long ages during which the worlds were building and this earth was being fitted for its use, the upward progress from the beginnings of life, through vegetable and animal forms to man; he sees the long course of human history, with all the whirlpools and eddyings of the current, as human freedom, used in the interests of sin, has retarded the forward movement and made it devious; he sees to-day all the confusion of the world, the mingling of things high and holy with things sinful, the baffling elements in society, business, politics, science, art, religion, the apparent chaos in which so many perceive no order: and in it all he beholds God's redemptive purpose steadily accomplishing itself; while in the future, far-off but distinct, he descries the end, the victory of Christ over evil, the redemption of the world.

V. It is no insignificant feature of the evidence of Christian experience that the believer's knowledge of the Christian verities is confirmed by that of his fellow-Christians. Attention has been called to the fact that in virtue of his relation to Christ he is a member of the body of Christ, that spiritual fellowship which finds outward expression in the Christian church. He therefore knows that he does not stand alone. The individual experience is supplemented by the general Christian experience. There is a common Christian consciousness as well as an individual consciousness. It is not a mere figure of speech when we speak of public opinion, of the national conscience, of the com-



mon beliefs of science. Men are so bound together in the world that knowledge passes from one to the other. Our education comes only as we partake of a common stock. In politics and social relations we share our experience with each other. The same is true, only with a meaning higher in proportion to the higher nature of the sphere, in religion. We are not shut up to the isolation of our personal experience of Christianity. Our first knowledge of the distinctive Christian truth comes from others. God's method of converting the world is to use Christians as his instruments. The young have the Christian life imparted to them by a long and complicated process, in which God and the soul are not the only factors; parents, teachers, and companions taking their part, though it may be only a subordinate one. Thus there is a traditional faith which becomes merged in a true, mature, personal faith.<sup>18</sup>

Now the fact that the individual experience is confirmed by the common experience is of the highest importance. The Christian does not depend upon himself and his inward life alone for his evidence. He is one of a great multitude, bound together by the closest ties, who have had the same experience and add their testimony to his. The experience through which the Christian passes to-day is the same as that through which Paul passed. It is the experience of Tertullian and Clement, of Anselm and Bernard, of Calvin and the Wesleys. It appears in innumerable books of religious biography. It is to be found to-day all over the Christian world. It is substantially the same among all bodies of Christians, in spite of the great differences of creed and practice. It is the experience



of the child brought up in a Christian land and of the converted heathen whose childhood has been spent among the pollutions and errors of a false religion, and whose first knowledge of the Gospel has come from the lips of a missionary. The Christian does not, therefore, stand alone in his faith. When it is called in question he appeals not merely to his own experience but also to that of the great multitude in all ages who have passed through the same. And in this appeal is involved one of his most powerful lines of evidence.<sup>19</sup>

VI. Finally, the Christian's inward assurance of the truth of Christianity increases as the process of sanctification advances, a fact which likewise furnishes its quota to the aggregate of evidence. We have seen how this assurance or certainty made its appearance at the beginning of the Christian life in connection with the changed heart. It was a certainty of regeneration, of the divine working in the soul, of the reality of the Holy Spirit, the Christ, and the Father, of the forgiveness of sins, of the kingdom of God. We call it the witness of the Spirit, following the teachings of the Bible (Rom. viii. 16 ; Gal. iv. 6 ; 1 John v. 10). This certainty increases and expands in the progress of Christian life. At first, though there can be no doubt as to its validity, it is relatively weak. The great outstreaming of feeling, in the new joy and peace of conversion, so often characteristic of the nascent Christian experience is not a true index of the strength of the persuasion upon which it rests. Not infrequently it is followed by a reaction which threatens to throw the believer back into the gloom of his pre-Christian state. But the stream which at first burst forth with a show



of size and strength so excessive in proportion to its real dimensions gathers power as it goes and makes for itself ever deeper channels. Christian certainty is cumulative and expansive. It finds in the contents of the new life ever-increasing ground for assurance. The Christian is continually learning more of the Father, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. As he walks with God and becomes more intimate with him in personal communion, and as he is associated with him in the work of the kingdom, his conviction of the reality of God as the Christian God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—becomes more and more invincible.

I do not mean to ignore the fact that even the best Christian has his seasons of doubt, or that they are often long-continued and distressing. Neither do I wish to set up assurance as a test of the reality of Christian experience; for doubtless there are many true Christians who all through their lives have a minimum of assurance respecting their own Christian state. Doubt is one of the results of remaining sin and of the sinful influences in the Christian's environment. It is not necessarily the fault of the Christian himself. I think all true Christians would admit, on the strength of their experience, that doubt has even its beneficent part to play in the educational process by which God ripens and sweetens the character of his people and fits them for service in this world and the other. In a world of sin, at any rate, there are not, and cannot always be, clear skies and the bright shining of the sun. The days of darkness are many.

But while I am ready, and indeed anxious, to give due place to the existence of doubt in the experience of the Christian, I deny that the fact in any way vitiates



the worth of the normal tendency of that experience to certainty. Many days of darkness and cloud in the physical world do not make us doubt the existence of the sun. We know that the shaded light which still makes it possible for us to see the world is the light of the sun, and when the clouds vanish and the great luminary shines in all his radiance, our certainty of his existence is all the stronger for the temporary obscuration. So the temporary seasons of doubt which befall even the best Christian do not invalidate his certainty, though for the time it is partially obscured. I am inclined to think that even in the case of those Christians who form the exception to the rule and have but little assurance, we are to take their utterances respecting themselves with considerable allowance, and that there exists under their timidity and doubt a certainty that is none the less real because in a measure concealed. Often Christians of this class, in the test of persecution or opposition, give the most radiant evidence of the strength and reality of their conviction. But however this may be, in the normal progress of the Christian experience there is an enlarging and deepening certainty which periods of occasional doubt obscure for the time, only to reveal it by their disappearance increased and strengthened.

It thus comes that in the progress of the Christian experience the certainty of the Christian realities becomes the fundamental certainty of life.<sup>20</sup> This is the case with religious certainty in general. In the order of development the certainty of the world comes first, that of our fellow-men next, that of self third, and that of God last; and this order indicates the relative strength of each at the outset. But this order of



development is precisely the opposite of the order of reality. An enlarging knowledge of things leads men to reverse the series. So it comes that the philosophy of religion brings to light the fact that the fundamental certainty is God. Now in the Christian experience we have a still higher grade of certainty; or perhaps I should say deeper, for it is in reality the certainty of God understood in its truest meaning. The Christian certainty, with its assurance of the existence of God as the God of grace and redemption, Father, Christ, and Holy Spirit; its assurance of union with Christ, forgiveness, progressive sanctification, designation to service; its assurance of God's redemptive working in the kingdom—this certainty, I say, is capable of becoming the highest and deepest of all.<sup>21</sup>



## LECTURE VI.

### THE VERIFICATION OF THE EVIDENCE.

WE have now before us the evidence of Christian experience. The new life in its beginning and its growth contains the proof of its own reality and divinity. The certainty of the Christian is based upon the firm foundation of an undeniable spiritual experience and of the divine facts involved in redemption.

Here we might rest the case. This experience satisfies the mind. The philosopher and the unlettered Christian, the mature man and the little child, the man brought up in a Christian country under Gospel influences and the heathen who has heard the Word first from the missionary's mouth, are alike convinced when they accept the Gospel terms and enter into the realm of the new life. To all true Christians their experience is the ground of an invincible assurance. And here the case is commonly rested by the writers on the evidences who give a place to this form of proof.

But I do not think that it would be right for us to stop here. Thus far we have considered the subject practically rather than scientifically. That the evidence is satisfactory to the ordinary Christian, who takes it just as it is, without especial reflection or investigation, is a strong point in its favor. Such practical evidence, verifying itself in the life, is commonly valid. But we must look further, for our design is



not merely practical. There are other questions which we must ask. Is this evidence of Christian experience capable of scientific or philosophical verification? Will it stand the tests of evidential logic? When the educated Christian subjects this experience to the searching scrutiny of an investigation conducted on scientific principles, does it still show itself to be truth?

My answer is, Yes; and it will be my endeavor in the next three lectures to show that the evidence of Christian experience is not only practically, but also scientifically or theoretically, valid. In the present lecture I shall try to do this positively; in the two following, by answering the objections, philosophical and theological, which are brought against the experimental proof.

I. In calling the verification scientific I use the term in the broad sense, not confining it to what is commonly denominated science by way of eminence, namely, physical science. The latter furnishes some of the most striking and typical illustrations of the scientific method, and, from the accuracy and conscientiousness with which it has applied that method, deserves to stand as a model for all the sciences. My reference, however, is to the methods of verification common to all the sciences. By a science I mean any department of verified and systemized knowledge. There are certain recognized methods and criteria by which we distinguish truth from error, by which we turn the simple unverified and unorganized knowledge of ordinary life into the verified and ordered truth of science. In their principle these methods are the same, but they vary in application according to the nature of the sphere concerned.

This last point is one of great importance. There is



always a temptation to treat two widely separated departments of knowledge as if they were alike, to the great detriment of the one thus made to conform to a false standard. We need to bear in mind that the spiritual sphere, with which our investigation has to do, is unique. Its facts are altogether different from those of the physical and material world. Its realm is not that of the things that may be weighed and measured, but of the things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, the things unseen and eternal (1 Cor. ii. 9; 2 Cor. iv. 18). But with this qualification we may apply the same general methods here as in other departments of science, and we may gain many useful hints from the sphere of physical science.

There are two objects which every science sets before it: the one, the discovery and verification of *facts*; the other, the systemization of those facts. These two objects are not wholly separable in practice, though they are clearly distinguishable. The processes by which they are attained go on to a certain extent side by side, and act and react upon each other, the discovery and verification of facts opening the way for the systemization, and the systemization leading the way to the discovery and verification of new facts. Our present inquiry has to do with the first of these objects. The evidence of Christian experience depends upon the discovery and verification of the facts of the new life. The systemizing of these facts belongs not to apologetics but to systematic theology.

What, now, is the fundamental task of science in dealing with the discovery and verification of facts? *I answer that it is the transformation of probable knowledge into real knowledge by experiment.*



In order to set clearly before you the meaning of this proposition, it is needful for me to call your attention to the different kinds of knowledge and their relation to each other. We may distinguish three.

The first is *purely formal* knowledge. It includes our apprehension of the necessary ideas or first principles of thought. It also includes the forms of reasoning based upon necessary principles in the formal sciences, such as logic and mathematics. We have to do here with ideas, laws, relations, and processes, but not with real existences. The intuitions are not things and do not stand for things; they are forms of thought, which doubtless correspond to the objective forms of things, but are to be distinguished from the things themselves. Logic and mathematics are, as I have just said, formal sciences. They do indeed have an indirect relation to real existences. They deal with notions, and these notions represent reality. But for the purposes of these sciences the question of the correspondence of the notion with the reality is not essential. The notions are mere counters of thought. The relation to reality is only hypothetical. Taking it for granted, as a supposition, that these notions represent so and so, we ask what results will follow from their combination and manipulation according to the mathematical and logical processes.

Now the certainty corresponding to this kind of knowledge is absolute. The knowledge is necessary knowledge. No sane man who is sufficiently mature to recognize the principles or follow the processes can repudiate them. The primitive intuitions of reason must be accepted. The demonstrations of logic and mathematics, supposing them to be rightly con-



ducted, are undeniable. The independent value of this kind of knowledge has often been overrated. "You do not cease," says Schopenhauer, "to boast of the reliability and certainty of mathematics. But what good does it do me to know ever so certainly and reliably what I have no interest in? . . . In mathematics the mind busies itself with its own forms of knowledge, time, and space, like the cat that plays with her own tail."<sup>1</sup> It is only when the formal sciences are used in the interests of reality that they become of real value. If not so used they may be good for securing mental discipline, but otherwise they are worthless.

The second kind of knowledge is that of *real existences*. By real existences I mean things that make themselves manifest in our consciousness, not through notions disconnected from objects, but through effects present in consciousness which reveal causes immediately affecting our consciousness. In other words, the basis of the knowledge of real existence is always an object known through sense-perception or the inner sense. Of this nature are the great universal facts which form the framework, or rather the foundation, of all our knowledge—self, the world, our fellow-man, God. Kant, as we noticed in a previous lecture, tried to show that these are merely formal and subjective ideas, but without success. To the same category belong the facts that make up our daily experience, facts which are not universal but contingent. The chief note of this kind of knowledge is contact, including action and reaction, that is, reciprocity between ourselves and the objects.<sup>2</sup> The certainty connected with this kind of knowledge is different from that which



accompanies the first kind. In so far as the knowledge is not universal, it cannot be said to be necessary. An experience which is confined to a part of mankind may be doubted or denied by the rest without detriment to their reputation for sanity.

Nevertheless, this kind of knowledge is to him who has it quite as real and cogent as the first kind. I say this, meaning to qualify the statement presently in some respects, but with an undoubting conviction of its general truth. The maxim, "Seeing is believing," is in point here. If an object is known by direct contact through the senses or otherwise, our knowledge of it is absolutely certain, and we possess the knowledge with as much conviction, though based on different grounds, as that of a first truth of reason or a mathematical demonstration.<sup>3</sup> It is also to be noted that the force of this kind of knowledge is not invalidated by the fact that we do not have the object at all times before us. When it has been once present, and known with certainty to be thus present, it may be recalled by the representative faculty with a certainty of its real existence no less genuine.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, where it is possible to renew the contact at will and repeatedly, there is a true sense in which there is an increase of this certainty—not, of course, a greater certainty of the fact but a greater certainty of what is involved in the fact.

The third kind of knowledge is that of *probability*. This has to do with existences which for various reasons we believe to be real, but which we do not know as real through their actual presence in consciousness, either now or at some past time. The reasons may be ever so good, but the contact fails. To this class be-



long those matters of knowledge that rest upon hypothesis, analogy, or mere inference, carrying with them a greater or less degree of likelihood but lacking the verification of experience. A very large part not only of our practical daily knowledge, but also of our scientific knowledge, is of this character. To the same class, also, belongs the knowledge that rests upon the testimony of others. Here the basis is an alleged knowledge through actual contact in the consciousness of others ; but the facts remain outside of our own consciousness. Thus we know the facts of history or of the world to-day, so far as they lie beyond the sphere of our direct cognition. In this way I know that Julius Cæsar lived, that Paul preached to the Gentiles, and that there is a country called Brazil in South America. If our knowledge of the veracity and trustworthiness of the persons to whom we owe the testimony is direct and satisfying, we may receive the facts to which they bear witness as true and act accordingly, but still this is something very different from our own first-hand knowledge. Here belong also those concepts or notions which have come to us through education or intercourse with the world, which we owe to books, and the like ; all identical in this, that they do not rest upon a basis of actual experience.<sup>5</sup>

Now the distinctive mark of this kind of knowledge is that it is not accompanied by *certainty* in the true sense of the term. At most it carries with it a high degree of *probability*. It is true that this high probability is itself sometimes called certainty, but incorrectly. It is "moral certainty," not true certainty. Moral certainty is so called either because it



rests upon the possessor's confidence in the trustworthiness of others whose testimony he accepts, or else because it is what for the practical purposes of life, its ordinary exigencies, we may take as certainty. But at the best it gives us only probability, greater or less.

Speaking of the evidence connected with this kind of knowledge, Bishop Butler says, in the Introduction to his *Analogy*: "Probable evidence is essentially distinguished from demonstrative" (he says nothing of real knowledge and its evidence) "by this, that it admits of degrees; and of all variety of them, from the highest moral certainty to the very lowest presumption. . . . That which chiefly constitutes *probability* is expressed in the word *likely*, that is, like some truth or true event; like it, in itself, in its evidence, in some (more or fewer) of its circumstances. . . . Probable evidence, in its very nature, affords but an imperfect kind of information. . . . To us probability is the very guide of life."<sup>6</sup> These last words have passed into a proverb. They are certainly true in so far as they emphasize the fact that a very large portion of the knowledge of ordinary men is of this kind, and that they have to make the best terms with it they can. That probability is a guide of life, and a most important one, we will all admit; but it does not follow that it is the only guide, or the most important one. Nor does it follow from the fact that in many things the ordinary man must rest satisfied with probability, that the scientific man can make no real advance toward true certainty.<sup>7</sup>

But we cannot stop here. A moment ago, in describing the knowledge of real existence, I gave notice that I should have to qualify my statements to some



extent. The time has now come to do so. We distinguish in the second kind of knowledge, namely, that of real existence, two elements. The first is the immediate apprehension the mind has of the object with which it has come into contact. The second is the fuller knowledge the mind has of the *nature* of the object. It is one thing to know *that* the object *exists*, and quite another to know *what* it is. The former kind of knowledge is simple and complete at the first; the certainty which attaches to it is incapable of increase or diminution.<sup>8</sup> The latter kind is exceedingly complex; it is capable of increase; and its certainty also is a matter of degree.

The nature and relation of these two elements in real knowledge appear when we consider that thought is possible only by the help of notions or concepts.<sup>9</sup> The two forms of presentative intuition, sense-perception and the inner sense or self-consciousness, assure us of that contact which is the starting-point for thought; but thought itself, and so knowledge in the full sense of the term, requires the help of the notion, that is, a product of the mind resulting from generalization, and combining many and varied elements.

The child and the man see the same star. The sensation of light in the consciousness of the two is the same. The certainty of the one respecting the reality of the sensation is neither greater nor less than that of the other. But the difference in their knowledge of its nature is enormous. The notion or concept predicated of the sensation in the mind of the child is vastly different from the notion in the mind of the man. One is almost tempted to say that the two do not see the same star. What the child sees is a



point of light in the solid sky, and the notion it has is imperfect, vague, distorted. What the man sees is a world or sun moving through the infinitude of space. His notion contains in it all the knowledge respecting the heavenly bodies which he has gathered in the course of his life. And even greater than the difference between the knowledge of the child and that of the man is the difference between the knowledge of the common man and that of the astronomer, who with telescope and spectroscope has made himself conversant with all the details. The latter has in his notion all the knowledge which the science of astronomy and his personal observation have furnished.

In this larger knowledge of actual existences the knowledge of probability has a part. The notion is a complex of knowledge consisting of many elements, often exceedingly heterogeneous. Some of its elements are connected with real existence that has been directly known in consciousness, others are derived from other sources and carry with them only the knowledge of probability. Our probable knowledge is always in advance of our real knowledge. We know what things are only in part through actual experience. We are influenced by our prejudices, by our associations, by our education; we reason by analogy; we frame our hypotheses; we avail ourselves of the testimony of others. Our notions are the result of all these agencies, and often it is exceedingly difficult for us to analyze them and distinguish the real from the merely probable in them. But the fact of which I am speaking is the condition of all progress in knowledge in the individual and in mankind at large. We accept at first as probable what we afterward verify through



our experience as actual. We rectify and enlarge the concepts through which we know the various objects presenting themselves to us in intuition. Thus the child advances in knowledge, gradually appropriating the stores of knowledge that others have gathered. Thus the world progresses, throwing out its skirmish line of probability, and following it up with the main army of its experience.

But it is to be noted that while even the knowledge of actual existence, when taken in the wider sense, has this element of probable knowledge, and consequently of merely relative certainty, still it does not lose its fundamental character. There is always an essential difference between the knowledge of experience, however large the element of probable knowledge connected with it through the notion associated with it, and the probable knowledge pure and simple. The one is at the bottom first-hand knowledge, the other is not. The traveler in a foreign land may bring home with him far more knowledge gained from guide-books than gotten through his own eyes. But the fact remains, differencing his knowledge from that of the best-read man; he has seen for himself.

Now the fundamental task of science in dealing with the discovery and verification of facts is, as has been said, the transformation of probable knowledge into real knowledge by experiment. The knowledge of ordinary life is to a considerable extent probable, and, where it is real knowledge, the concepts or notions through which it is thought contain a large element of probable knowledge. We rest satisfied with approximate certainty, and do not trouble ourselves too much about absolute certainty. It is in this sense that But-



ler's maxim is true, as I said a few moments ago, that "probability is the very guide of life." But it is just here that scientific knowledge differs from ordinary knowledge. Science cannot rest contented with probability where certainty is attainable. It demands real facts. Its method is to put the facts to the test of experiment, and thus to confirm or overthrow the probable knowledge. Or where there are facts known by contact, it takes the notions associated with those facts and subjects them in their elements to the same tests, thus eliminating the false and giving certainty to the true. This is true of physical science, which demands a basis of facts known through experiment. It is equally true of the other sciences. Thus in history, the science that rests to so large an extent upon testimony, the great change which the introduction of the modern scientific method has brought about has been the recourse to the "sources," that is, to documents or monuments, which carry us back of the testimonies we find in the chronicles or unscientific histories of later times, and give us, to some extent at least, a contact with the original events.

It is this that gives science its basis of fact, without which it would be nothing. The great service performed by Lord Bacon lay just here. In the Middle Ages science had become a matter of opinion rather than of facts. The notions of the understanding, often based upon the scantiest foundation of reality, were made the starting-point of science. Bacon, speaking in the name of the best thought of his age, cried halt to this tendency. He insisted that the scientific man must cast out from the sanctuary of his mind the idols or unfounded notions which infest it, and bring all



things to the test of experiment. The idols of the tribe, the cave, the market-place, and the theatre—that is, the unfounded and unreal notions having their foundation in human nature itself, or in the peculiarity of the individual man, or resulting from the ordinary association of men, or from the baseless speculations of the philosophers—must give place to actual knowledge based upon the contact of experience.<sup>10</sup> The first words of the *Novum Organum* strike the keynote to the new scientific method: “Man, being the servant and interpreter of nature, can do and understand so much, and so much only, as he has observed in fact or in thought of the course of nature; beyond this he neither knows anything nor can do anything.”<sup>11</sup> Would that physical science, with its inflated currency of theory, would attend to these words! Again he says: “We must lead men to the particulars themselves, and their series and order; while men on their side must force themselves for awhile to lay their notions by and begin to familiarize themselves with facts.”<sup>12</sup> Again: “The question, whether or no anything can be known,” is “to be settled not by arguing, but by trying.”<sup>13</sup>

Similar in its aim is the method of later science, to which the name has been given of the “Newtonian induction.” This deals not with the first discovery and verification of facts, but with the enlargement of our knowledge through the discovery of new facts. It begins with an hypothesis based upon facts already known, a shrewd guess as to the truth on the ground of the indications of known facts; or, we might say, a guess which expresses the probability inherent in the facts. This hypothesis is then subjected to deduction; that is, the results which should ensue from its appli-



cation to particular cases are determined. Finally, the results thus hypothetically stated are subjected to the test of experiment, and thus confirmed or rejected.<sup>14</sup> The great value of a "working hypothesis" in science lies in the number of new facts which are experimentally brought to light by its help. What gives the hypothesis of evolution its high worth in natural science to-day is the vast number of new facts which it has enabled investigators to discover and to verify experimentally. Should it cease thus to open the way to the enlargement of real knowledge it would be discarded to-morrow by the men of science. Newtonian induction is thus concerned with the transformation of probable knowledge, as expressed in the hypothesis and the cases deduced from it, into real knowledge.

II. We come now to the application of these principles of all science to the evidence of Christian experience. The entrance into the sphere of Christian experience follows the scientific method in that it is a transformation of probable knowledge into real knowledge by experiment. It is emphatically real knowledge which it claims to have. The very term experience indicates this; it implies the existence of objects with which we come into actual contact. We do not experience the first principles of thought or the processes of logic and mathematics. Still less do we experience the knowledge of probability. In every case experience implies the presence of real existence acting directly upon and in our consciousness.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, the certainty belonging to Christian experience is not a mere moral certainty but a true certainty.

It is true that the knowledge of Christian experience has, like much of our real knowledge, an element of



probability. Like our other knowledge it is in part second-hand; otherwise it would not be the partial and growing knowledge the Bible everywhere declares it to be. The notions through which it is thought have their element of derived knowledge. But this fact does not alter the fundamental character of Christian experience. It is based in real knowledge. It stands upon an altogether different footing from that probable knowledge which involves no contact with the redemptive realities. Its fundamental certainty is complete and unquestionable. Its anchor enters into that within the veil (Heb. vi. 19). The Christian must indeed say, "We know in part and we prophesy in part" (1 Cor. xiii. 9). But he can also say, "We have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (John iv. 42). His increasing certainty of the nature of the Christian realities is based upon his absolute certainty of their existence. He has tasted and seen that the Lord is good (Ps. xxxiv. 8). Accordingly, the evidence of Christian experience, even when taken in its weakest form, has a value that the strongest probable evidence cannot have. A single glimpse of the divine grace is a stronger proof than libraries of probable arguments.<sup>16</sup>

1. We recur to the statement made a moment ago, that the entrance into the sphere of the Christian experience is confirmed as valid by the fact that it follows the scientific method. I do not ignore the fact that this kind of knowledge is altogether different from that which belongs to the other departments with which science has to do. But in this respect the act of faith by which the Christian life is entered is scientific: it is the transformation of probable knowledge



into real knowledge by means of experiment. The knowledge of divine things which is brought to the unconverted man by revelation and the witness of believing Christians is second-hand or merely probable. Such a man has indeed an experimental knowledge of God, but the distinctively Christian knowledge comes to him only as a matter of probability.

This probable knowledge of Christianity is not to be despised. It has a very high value. The concepts with which revelation and the experience of others furnish us are as valid as a large part of our knowledge. One educated in a Christian land has been under the influence of these concepts, and the knowledge they convey, from his infancy, and they have grown with his growth, where no untoward influence has intervened, and strengthened with his strength. The probability is high, so high that, if Butler's maxim is correct, there is the best reason for acting according to it. There are a thousand things in our daily life that guide and control our actions, yet for which we have not evidence half so strong. All the evidences of Christianity, except the one we are examining in these lectures, are active in the community and make their influence felt even upon those who have not the culture or intellect to investigate them. Even the evidence of Christian experience is known through the testimony of Christians, a testimony which every candid mind must regard as having a high worth.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that this pre-Christian knowledge of Christianity is only probable knowledge. From the nature of the case it cannot be otherwise. But there is a way open, though only one way, by which it can be turned from probable into real knowl-



edge. That is the scientific way of experiment. It is not like that large portion of our probable knowledge which we cannot turn into the knowledge of experience from lack of ability or opportunity. God through Christ and the Holy Spirit has made it possible for everyone who will to put the Gospel to the test and learn for himself whether it is true or false. It is the part of reason to try. The sinner who puts the Saviour to the test acts scientifically. He follows the highest dictate of reason. There is, indeed, a certain risk in it of disappointment and defeat. But it is the risk taken by every scientific experimenter, and wisely taken.<sup>17</sup>

2. But, as a matter of fact, no one who takes this risk is ever disappointed. Experiment gives contact. The probable knowledge is changed into real knowledge. The testimony is confirmed by the reality. The hypothesis is verified by the trial. Let us, then, look more closely at the experience of the Christian and the evidence it affords. We shall consider its various elements separately. But let us remember that they do not exist separately in reality. They form together one organism of knowledge.

(1.) The fundamental element is the great change in the man himself, by which he passes from death unto life. The new *I*, the presence of life eternal, the transformed will, the enlightened intellect, the renewed sensibility, the quieted conscience—these are the salient points in this wonderful experience. Now this is a change within the sphere of consciousness. This is the sphere in which, even according to the agnostic and positivist, we can have absolute certainty. So much modern science without hesitation concedes. Says Je-



vons, speaking of scientific certainty: "Whatever feeling is actually present to the mind is certainly known to that mind. If I see blue sky, I may be quite sure that I do experience the sensation of blueness. Whatever I do feel, I do feel beyond all doubt. We are indeed very likely to confuse what we really feel with what we are inclined to associate with it, or infer inductively from it; but the whole of our consciousness, as far as it is the result of pure intuition and free from inference, is certain knowledge beyond all doubt."<sup>18</sup>

This change is known directly, and the certainty attaching to it is a certainty that has the sanction of all science. The Christian can no more doubt it than he can doubt his own existence. His certainty respecting it is complete. His experience is knowledge pure and simple.<sup>19</sup> I will not attempt to describe again what has been so fully treated in a former lecture,<sup>20</sup> but I wish to emphasize the fact that this basal element in Christian experience does not admit of doubt, but carries with it the highest validity. And in order that it should be valued at its true worth, it is not needful that the Christian should know the day and moment of his conversion. The fact of the change is all-sufficient. Even the child brought up from the first within the Christian fold knows that there is a life within which is altogether different from the sinful life of nature. There is a holy growth which could not have sprung from the evil soil of the natural heart.<sup>21</sup>

It is a notable fact that this change, so great and marked is it even in its outward manifestation, makes a powerful impression upon those who have not experienced it, and even the unbelieving thought of our day is inclined to treat it as a reality. Whatever may be



its cause, it does change the whole current of men's lives, making them inwardly and outwardly new men. It satisfies the deepest and most crying needs of their nature.

In this fundamental experience, then, there is no element of probable knowledge. We have certainty, not of the moral sort, but real and complete. It is indeed true that we are brought to this experience by the objective revelation and by the Bible which records it. The way of salvation is there laid down and the nature of the new life described. There is a true sense in which we recognize the great change by the aid of the Bible. But there is a sense in which it is equally true that this experience is independent of the Bible. It passes over from probability into actuality and thus confirms the truth of the Bible. But no man could pass through it, whether he had the Bible or not, without knowing it for the change it is. If it be true that any of the heathen are regenerated in this life, they must have some knowledge of the fact, though they will of course describe it in different terms and explain it in different ways from the Christian.

(2.) The Christian's knowledge of the *Cause* of the great change he has experienced is different from his knowledge of the change itself, but, I am inclined to think, not less certain. The question turns upon our view of the relation of the contents of consciousness to their causes. If we hold the Kantian doctrine, or that of the agnostics and positivists, that knowledge is subjective and that we can have no knowledge of causes, of course there can be no certainty; indeed, there cannot be even probability; we are shut up to



blank ignorance with respect to everything except the subject and its modifications. But if we take the truer view, at once more philosophical and more scientific, that the cause is known through the effect, the object that modifies consciousness through the modification of consciousness, then the case is different. Subject and object alike are known in every act of cognition. Where there is real contact and the object is present, this presence of the object is known. We can have no knowledge of actual existence otherwise. The change which takes place is not an actual existence itself, that is, it is not an object, but the manifestation of one. It calls for an explanation. It is the sign of the contact of the man with an object external to himself, and at the same time it is the medium of the disclosure of that object. The effect in consciousness is not a wall that separates subject from object, it is rather a bond that unites the two.<sup>22</sup>

Thus it is in sense-perception. I say that I see an object—a chair, for example. What do I mean? That there is present in my consciousness a group of sensations, of form, color, and the like, and that there is also present in my consciousness the knowledge of an object outside of myself. By the process of perception my mind reacts upon that object and apprehends it. I am certain that the cause of the sensations to which I referred is not myself but some being external to myself. I know, also, by the nature of the effects that it is a material and not a spiritual being. My full knowledge of the object is attained when I apply to it the concept *chair*, in an implied or expressed judgment, “This is a chair,” which notion includes not only what is actually known in the perception, but



all my knowledge of whatever kind, and derived from whatever source, respecting the class to which this object belongs.

Now the Christian, in full conformity with the laws of the human mind, discovers in the great change of regeneration its true Cause, namely, God. That Cause is revealed in and through the new life that is pulsating in his soul. The renewed will, the enlightened intellect, the quickened and purified sensibility, the quieted conscience, are effects that disclose a divine power. These modifications of consciousness are the instrument of what may be called (borrowing our terms from the sense-side of our mental nature) a spiritual perception. The possibility and actuality of such spiritual knowledge cannot be fairly denied. "As through the impressions of sense," declares Professor Harris, "we perceive our physical environment, so through rational and spiritual principles, sentiments, and susceptibilities we perceive our spiritual environment, the universal and all-illuminating Reason, the Absolute Spirit, and the system of personal and spiritual beings related to him. Man is conscious of God in a manner analogous to that in which he is conscious of the outward world."<sup>23</sup> The same able writer says, "As man, being as to his body included in nature, is surrounded by a physical environment which is constantly acting on him and presenting itself in his consciousness, so man, as spirit, is surrounded by a spiritual environment which is constantly acting on him and presenting itself in his consciousness. That environment is God."<sup>24</sup>

This has been clearly shown already in our lecture on the theistic presupposition. We do not come to



the Christian experience ignorant of God. He has been known before in consciousness, in the common religious experience. The notion of God is present in the mind as something well defined and certain, resting on constant contact with God in all the spheres of our being. We are not, therefore, at a loss to discover the true cause of regeneration. The Christian knows that the effect is not due to himself as a cause. No fact is more certain than that he has had no decisive hand in producing the result. So far as he has acted at all, he knows himself to have been only an instrument, dependent upon a higher power. He knows that he has been moulded by an agency outside of himself. He cannot ascribe the transformation to the unintelligent forces of nature. The effect is not such as is produced by material or physical causes. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6); here are two altogether different and incongruous spheres. His fellow-men, weak and sinful like himself, cannot be the cause. One cause, and one only, he knows sufficient for the effect, and that is God. It is God that is revealed in the new life. The Christian with his natural knowledge of God, in whom he has always lived and moved and had his being, knows the divine handiwork when he sees it, and can have no doubt that it is from God. It reveals the divine Author as truly as nature and the human soul reveal God in his natural aspects as the God of creation and providence.

I do not undertake to explain the nature of the divine activity in regeneration. That is confessedly beyond us. It is as much a mystery as creation.



Accordingly, I do not venture any theory as to the nature of our knowledge of God through regeneration and its effects. All that I assert is that somehow—in a manner analogous to that of sense-perception, though not in all respects the same—the soul is able to recognize in this wonderful experience the presence and active power of God.

Whether this apprehension of God as the Author of the new life is mediate or immediate, is a matter of minor importance. In either case there is the certainty that God is there and actively at work. Evangelical theologians unanimously assert that regeneration and the new life are supernatural in the sense that they are due to the direct efficiency of God. Lutheran theology emphasizes the necessity of the “means of grace,” the Word and the sacraments, making them the exclusive channels of the divine activity. Reformed theology represents the means of grace as the ordinary instruments of God in the initiation and continuance of the new life, but gives them a wider scope, including prayer and other agencies among the means, and also—which is of most importance—asserting that God can, when he sees fit, dispense with means in the administration of his grace. But all evangelical theologians agree that God, whether through means or without means, gains such access to the soul that he acts directly upon it, and, when the new life is established, is immanent in it.<sup>25</sup>

Now, if it is possible for the subject of regeneration and the new life to have a knowledge of the Author of the change through the change itself, this would seem to require us to take the position that sense is not the only source of knowledge respecting real existences,



but that on the other side, so to speak, of the soul, there are possibilities of what may be called spiritual apprehension. But if any prefer to hold to the view that sense-perception is the only channel of knowledge respecting real existences (for we are speaking of real existences or objects, and not of the principles or laws known through rational intuition), I would not quarrel with them. Our evidence is not dependent upon the particular solution of the psychological problem here suggested. The theory of knowledge is one of the most difficult subjects in philosophy. Even if in some way sense should be the medium of our knowledge of God's presence and activity in regeneration and the new life, the reality of the immediateness of God's action would not be impaired.<sup>26</sup> An activity may be *immediate* and yet not *unmediated*.<sup>27</sup> Modern investigation into the nature of causation, spiritual and material, is exploding the old notion that intervening media separate the cause from the effect, and showing that, on the contrary, they serve to unite the two more closely. In our knowledge of finite spirits sense-media always intervene.<sup>28</sup> But when my child stands before me and talks with me, the immediacy of our communion is not impaired or impugned by the fact, taught me by physiological psychology, that spirit touches spirit only through a dozen or a hundred intervening media.

I do not, then, place the certainty of the Christian with respect to the divine authorship of the new life upon any lower level than that which he has respecting the reality of the new life itself. The certainty of the cause is involved in the certainty of the effect. There is **real contact** with a known object. The presence of



God—let us say it with due humility, yet with confidence—is not probable but certain.

There is here, also, that relative independence of the objective revelation to which reference was made when speaking of regeneration. The outward revelation, or the Bible in which it is recorded, opens to us the way through which we may come under the influence of the divine Power that works in regeneration ; but when the Christian has actually felt that Power, he knows it not only because the Bible has told him so, but also because he has the reality in his own experience. Indeed, the movement is now quite in the opposite direction, not from the Bible but toward it. It is the divinity, manifest and indubitable, of the new life which authenticates the Bible and the objective revelation which it records.

(3.) But when we come to consider the further elements in the Christian's experience, we encounter a much more difficult and complicated problem. I refer to what we have called the trinitarian character of the experience, namely, as a knowledge of the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit ; as well as to its christological and soteriological character, so far as it relates to the person and offices of the Saviour. Let me, however, say in advance of our discussion that while the evidence here is different in some important respects, and the certainty is not that simple and absolute certainty which belongs to the simple apprehension of the object that is in contact with the soul, but that growing certainty that is connected with the progressive verification of the contents of a concept or notion belonging to the object known, still I do not mean to imply that the Christian has any reason for calling in question



either the evidence or the certainty. From the first he may have an assurance of the reality of the Christian facts greater than that which he has with reference to the common facts of his life in the material world. From the first the basis of it all is first-hand ; it is founded upon actual contact, and is not the knowledge of mere probability resting on hypothesis or testimony. The new life, the presence of God in it, and the special Christian knowledge form an inseparable organism of knowledge, of which all the elements are integral and essential parts, and which receives its distinctive character from the fundamental facts, known with absolute certainty, of the new life and its divine Cause.

The knowledge of the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father comes first to the Christian, like all his Christian knowledge, from the objective revelation. The Bible, and the experience of other Christians verifying it, supply the notions or concepts by which the new life is known in its true nature. These notions, like many of those which we are constantly using in our daily life, are at first based upon probable knowledge, and then gradually turned into real knowledge by experience. But while the certainty of the new life and its divine Cause separates itself immediately from the revelation and becomes in the fullest sense the personal possession of the Christian, the certainty respecting the inmost nature of the divine Cause, as Father, Christ, and Spirit, though present from the first, grows and deepens, reaching its full maturity only in a higher stage of existence. In the mirror of the new life the Christian sees enough at first to convince him that the Bible tells the truth. His experience reveals the three personal divine Agents. He verifies by his



experience the Christian concepts of Father, Christ, and Spirit in their broad outlines.

But in the progress of the Christian life there is a constantly increasing appropriation of the teachings of revelation respecting these facts, an advancing verification of the Christian concepts. "There is a wide difference," says Dr. John Owen, though apparently without a full understanding of the importance of the principle he is laying down, "between the mind's receiving doctrines *notionally*, and its receiving the things taught in them *really*." <sup>29</sup> In the course of the Christian life there is a continuous transformation of doctrine into reality, of notional knowledge into real knowledge. In this sense there is, during the present state of existence, always an element of probable and second-hand knowledge in the Christian's apprehension of the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father. As the believer grows in grace he grows in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. iii. 18), and in the same way he grows in the knowledge of the Holy Ghost and of God the Father. But this cannot be called second-hand knowledge, because there is a real contact, from the first known and understood, between the soul and the sacred Three. Moreover, there is a difference with respect to his knowledge of the Three. He does not know them in the same way, or with an increase that is altogether proportionate in the different cases. His relation of contact with the Three is different. <sup>30</sup>

a. The knowledge of the Spirit is, as our examination of the Christian experience in the two previous lectures showed us, fundamental. It is also attended with the fewest difficulties. I do not mean by this



that the Christian in his reflections upon his inner experience, as they are expressed in the language of the practical religious life or in his theological system, generally gives the first place to the Spirit. On the contrary, the realization of the importance of the Spirit in the Christian life comes comparatively late in the case of the individual, as it has come in that of the Christian church. What I mean is that the Spirit as the proximate cause of the new life is nearer to us, and as a fact is more readily apprehended.

The great and important fact which gives the evidence its value is the immanence of the Spirit. It is not altogether easy to put into words what is meant by this indwelling. We know too little of the nature of spirit, and of the relation of spirits to each other, to be able clearly to express what is involved in this fact. But this much it certainly means, that there is in the soul of the believer an immediate and abiding manifestation of the Holy Spirit in his essence and his activity.

It is not the personality but the power of the Spirit that is most prominent.<sup>31</sup> That there is an indwelling power of God the Christian is conscious. The side of truth represented in pantheism, that God dwells in man, is corrected and further applied in the Christian doctrine of the Spirit. The Christian knows that here is the Divine. In regeneration the centre of his life shifted from himself to God, and that not a God afar off but a God within. In every act of his Christian life, in all his struggles with sin and all his efforts after holiness, in all his Christian service, he knows the presence of this power of God. I think it would be true to say that the Christian's certainty of



the agency of God in the new life and his certainty of the agency of the Spirit are identical. The further knowledge is simply the recognition of the fact that this indwelling God, as known directly in the new life, does not exhaust the reality of God, that there is more beyond.

The great stress that is laid upon the presence of the Spirit in the evidence of Christianity delineated in the Bible shows that the sacred writers regarded this as the fundamental fact in comparison with the knowledge of Christ and of God the Father. The presence of the Spirit *is* the evidence. The apostles asked their disciples whether they possessed the Spirit, and expected them to be able to answer whether this was the case or not (Acts xix. 2). It is true they had in mind miraculous, as well as ordinary, evidences of the Spirit's presence. But the principle is the same, whether the proof be that of miracles or of a regenerate heart. It is the presence of personal indwelling divine power, guiding and shaping the man, and moving him to holy thoughts and acts.

The Christian, under the guidance of the objective revelation, is thus able distinctly to recognize the indwelling Spirit.

b. The next step in the evidence is more difficult. In attempting our scientific verification of it we must remember that we have to do with a unique element in a unique experience. The analogies we may draw from other spheres of human knowledge will only serve us in part and will inevitably bring us into trouble if we press them too far. Nevertheless, I think we may show that our procedure is reasonable, and our conclusions valid. The Christ is known through the



Spirit. This is the constant teaching of revelation, and it is consistent with all its other teachings concerning the Christ. He is not here but risen and ascended to heaven. Hence we cannot know him in the same way that we know the Spirit. To claim that we do so is to subvert all the teachings of the Gospel. The Saviour did not mean that his disciples should have immediate knowledge of him in his humanity, as they had when he was on earth. It was expedient that he should go away, and as he has gone away, so he is to come again. Meantime he is in heaven, and his work on earth and his communication with his disciples are through the Spirit.

But it is reasonable to conclude that if he is a real living power, working from his invisible throne, he should be known through his works, and most of all through the work in the Christian's inward life of which the direct or proximate cause is the Spirit. It is not unscientific to claim that an ultimate cause should be known through the effects of a proximate cause. The fact that there are intervening agencies—or in other words, that the ultimate cause does its work through means—is altogether according to the analogy of causation in other and lower spheres. The king is known by the acts of his servants performed under his authority. We know the spirits of our fellow-men through physical agencies producing sense-impressions upon our consciousness, and who shall say that this is not as certain and satisfying as any kind of knowledge? Our hermit spirits do not range apart in their separate spheres to such an extent as to make their rational fellowship with each other impossible.

However unique the relation of the believer to Christ



through the Spirit may be, there is nothing unscientific in the evidence he claims to have of the Saviour's living power and spiritual presence. The Christian is indeed dependent here, as elsewhere, on the objective Gospel, and perhaps to a greater extent than elsewhere. But he is able to recognize his Lord in his experience. The new life which the Spirit produces is the proof that Christ is upon the throne; it comes only to those who comply with his conditions and exercise faith in him, and it comes to all such. It bears his mark upon it. The new man is created in the image of Christ. The handiwork bears the impress of both his divinity and his humanity; it manifests at once the prophetic, priestly, and kingly efficiency of the Saviour. The believer looks up to Christ through the Spirit, and knows himself to be a member of his mystical body. Through the Spirit he lives in communion with Christ.

I am anxious not to claim too much here. I know that it is only slowly that the Christian is able to transfer the conceptions of Christ furnished by revelation to the Being whom he knows through the Spirit. I am aware of the danger of assuming to know Christ after the flesh. But I think it is not too much to say that the Christian has from the beginning a first-hand knowledge of the Saviour, which comes to him with an evidence that not only satisfies his religious need but also his scientific need.

c. The Christian's knowledge of the Father through the Spirit and the Christ is even more unique than his knowledge of the Christ. This is the sanctuary of Christian experience, this deep, sacred apprehension of the hidden Source and Principle of the Godhead, the



divine Person who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 Tim. vi. 16). Revelation has much to tell of him in his redemptive manifestation of himself to the world. But the Christian who has been regenerated and forgiven, who has come into fellowship with Christ through the Spirit, finds an access to the Father which fully verifies all that the Gospel teaches as to the nature and character of this adorable First Person of the Trinity. To the believer the Father reveals himself as he does not unto the world. The new life, which is a revelation of the Spirit and the Christ, is through them a revelation of the Father. The Apostle John tells us the secret; the inmost cause of the Christian life is known through the effect: "Everyone that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . No man hath beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us; hereby know we that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John iv. 7-14). This is scientific evidence, the causes, proximate and ultimate, known through the effect. I fear it is because we as Christians have so little of the life of God in us, that we know so little of the Father, the God of redemption, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(4.) It is characteristic of a scientific proof of the reality of objects known through actual contact that it is confirmed and strengthened as the experience is continued. There is a certainty of the fact which, as we



have seen, is complete from the first; but there is a certainty respecting the *nature* of the fact which is capable of enlargement and verification. No test could be better or more scientific than that which comes from the continuance and increase of experience. In the long run truth establishes itself and error fails. Now the fact that the experience of the Christian in its advancing stages confirms the truth of Christianity is a matter of no small importance. If the concepts which the objective revelation furnishes were not true, they could not be verified by the progress of the new life. Whatever possibilities there might be for deception in the earlier stages of the Christian life, this deception would be sure to manifest itself as time went on. But no evidence of the reality of the experience could be better or more convincing than the fact that, as time goes on, the certainty of the Christian enlarges and deepens, and he more and more verifies by actual contact the contents of the notions furnished by the Gospel.

Sanctification in its progress is the confirmation of the new life begun in regeneration. The holy seed then implanted grows into the great tree of the new manhood. The great Christian realities, Father, Christ, and Holy Spirit, become more and more real and certain to the Christian in the course of his experience, and more and more he is able to transfer the truth of revelation, which he has received at second-hand, to the real Beings whom he knows in his personal experience. His communion with them becomes more and more real. The correlation of prayer and providence grows increasingly unmistakable. Faith does not, it is true, lose its essential character and turn into sight, but it



increasingly vindicates its claim to knowledge, flowing in ever deeper channels and with a steady and constant stream that betokens reality and power.

When we consider the evidence upon which men base the larger part of their daily conduct, to what a small extent actual first-hand knowledge enters in, how much depends upon hypotheses and analogies more or less reasonable, how much upon the unverified testimony of others, how much upon mere instinct—when we consider this, and compare with it the increasing evidence which the Christian has in his advancing religious experience, it is not too much to say that we have a far better foundation for the reality of the things we are concerned with in our spiritual life than for that of the things of our secular life.<sup>32</sup>

(5.) One of the ultimate tests of knowledge—than which none is more scientific, whatever be the department of human investigation—is agreement among those who have access to the facts. In the sphere of physical science this test is of the highest value. The individual may be wrong in his conclusions and may be deceived in his experiments. There is room for many deceptions in the interpretation of facts known through the contact of actual experience. For this reason the men of science unite together in their investigations, supplementing the work of the one by that of the many. And when a fact is verified by the investigations of all, when the experiment yields the same result in all hands, then there is the strongest ground for accepting its reality.

This test Christianity triumphantly sustains. We do not claim, it is true, that it discloses a knowledge possessed by all or admitted by all. That would be



contrary to the nature of Christian experience, which is not universal but confined to those who accept the conditions of Christ laid down in the Gospel. But it is a fact not to be denied, that all who conform to the conditions and enter the kingdom of God by the willing acceptance of Christ make the same discoveries. I do not mean that all Christians give the same account of their experience either doctrinally or philosophically. All I assert is that they are in agreement about the great facts themselves, and that they give their assent, on the ground of what they have themselves passed through, to the teachings of the objective revelation, asserting its truth to reality.

Multitudes in all ages have tried the Gospel method and have found peace in believing. The new life, the persons and work of the Father, Son, and Spirit, the forgiveness of sins, and all the other Christian facts, have become realities to them. In this class have been included the best and noblest men who have ever lived. The keenest and most cultured intellects have found their highest satisfaction in this realm of knowledge. Men without number have given their lives in attestation of their conviction that these sacred facts are what Christianity claims. As the world has advanced in knowledge and wisdom, the number of believers has not diminished but, on the contrary, wonderfully increased. To-day, in the full light of this remarkable century, the number is far greater than ever before. The most successful men in every department of human endeavor are numbered among them. If any value is to be attached to the character and influence of its adherents, Christianity can make a stronger showing for its truth than any opinion or any belief. If good



testimony is to carry the day—by which I mean the testimony of the men and women who in other matters are considered the most trustworthy—no system of scientific truth has a tithe of the evidence in its favor which Christianity possesses.

In conclusion, let me very briefly recall to you the ground over which we have passed in this lecture. My object was to show that the evidence of Christian experience is scientifically verifiable. We saw that there are three kinds of knowledge, the knowledge of necessary truths, the knowledge of real existences, and the knowledge of probability. We identified the knowledge of Christian experience with the second kind, the knowledge of real existences. We saw that the great task of all science is to transform probable knowledge into real knowledge by means of experiment. Then, taking up the elements of Christian experience one by one, I tried to show that the evidence with which we are dealing is truly scientific; it is a progressive transformation of the probable knowledge that comes to men through the Word and the church into a real and personally experienced knowledge by actual trial, a trial in which the individual Christian finds the reality of his own experience verified by the testimony of all who, like him, have put the Gospel to the test.

I cannot but think that we have succeeded in our attempt. If we have not done so, if my presentation of the subject has failed to make the evidence clear and reasonable, the fault lies with me, not in any defect of the evidence itself. That is strong and irrefutable. If I have failed, others will do successfully what I have tried to do.



## LECTURE VII.

### PHILOSOPHICAL OBJECTIONS.

IN discussing a subject so important as that with which we are engaged it is not enough to state the positive evidence adducible in its favor. The objections brought forward by its opponents ought also to be candidly stated, carefully weighed, and satisfactorily answered. My chief difficulty in presenting this side of the subject is to find any systematic statement of the objections to the evidence of Christian experience. The adversaries of Christianity are wont with a certain impatience to brush away the evidence derived from this source as unworthy of consideration, and to devote their attention exclusively to the external evidence, especially the historical. Even the friends of the Christian system who reject this experimental proof pass it by with scant recognition. In spite, however, of this absence of formal and carefully stated counter-arguments, it will not be impossible to supply the deficiency in a good degree, and I trust I shall be able to do it with some measure of success, and at the same time with the fairness indispensable to such a discussion.

I shall gather the numerous objections which suggest themselves under two heads, the philosophical and the theological. We shall examine the former in the present lecture, leaving the latter for our next meeting.



I. The first objection touches the *possibility* of the Christian experience. It is based upon the assumption that all knowledge is confined to sensible things, and that therefore Christian experience, which claims to be concerned with supersensible and spiritual things, is not entitled to credence. This whole realm of spiritual realities is declared to be illusory, the creation of the pious imagination, the baseless fabric of a vision which must fade before the scrutiny of science and vanish, leaving not a rack behind.

This objection takes different forms according to the particular system of philosophy from which it springs. A modern philosophical writer upon the evidences of Christianity has said: "He who in our day wishes to prove the Christian faith will from the first have to contend with two classes of scientific opponents. Those of one class say: 'Nothing is capable of proof, therefore faith also is incapable of it.' Those of the other: 'Everything is capable of proof with the exception of faith.'"<sup>1</sup> To the first class belong the positivists and agnostics, to the second the materialists.

The positivists assert that we know nothing but phenomena, that is, sensations. Whether these facts known in consciousness have a cause—in other words, whether there is an objective reality corresponding to them—is a matter with which we have no concern. The positive philosopher or man of science will renounce all metaphysical speculation and confine himself to the investigation of phenomena in their co-existences and sequences—that is to say, he will confine himself to sensations and their relations. The sensations, or sense-phenomena, are fundamen-



tal and essential. If there seem to be a higher class of phenomena which we might call spiritual, these are to be explained exclusively through the sense-phenomena.

The agnostics admit that there is an objective Reality and go so far as to clothe it with the metaphysical attributes of God. They even declare that the relation in which men stand to this Reality involves all that is essential in the idea of religion. But all that seems thus to be given is taken away when we discover that the great Reality or Cause is unknown, and that the religion conceded has for its meagre creed the proposition "that the Power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable."<sup>2</sup> Having granted the existence of the unknown Reality, the agnostic withdraws, like the positivist, into the region of phenomena, that is, of sensations. He declares that the work of the philosopher is to explain this world of phenomena, which constitutes his universe, in "terms of matter, force, and motion."<sup>3</sup>

The materialist at first seems to be at the very opposite pole from the agnostic and positivist. The latter, although they assert that the sense-phenomena which we call material are all that we can know, yet deny that we can have any knowledge of a reality called matter. The materialist, on the contrary, starts with the reality of matter and energy as his fundamental assumption. He will explain all things through these causes, to which he ascribes the metaphysical attributes which the theist predicates of God—eternity, unchangeableness, and the like. But in spite of the apparent contradiction, the positivist and the agnostic agree at the bottom with the materialist. I waive the



question as to the self-consistency of materialism, and whether if this inconsistency were corrected the materialist would not become a positivist or agnostic, as the great modern historian of materialism, Lange, is a Neo-Kantian.<sup>4</sup> What I assert is that the three philosophies, by making sensation the exclusive source and element of human knowledge, occupy essentially the same ground. They agree in denying that there is any higher sphere than that of the sensible.

Various reasons might be given for the prevalence of this view at the present time. The thoughts of men are engrossed with the things of sense. The mad modern chase after wealth and material well-being has something to do with it. The tendency of scientific investigation, by directing men's thoughts to sensible things, has had its share in bringing about the result. But whatever the reason, there can be no doubt as to the fact. There are multitudes of thinking men to whom the words of Mephistopheles are applicable to-day :

“ Was ihr nicht tastet steht euch meilenfern ;  
 Was ihr nicht fasst, das fehlt euch ganz und gar ;  
 Was ihr nicht rechnet, glaubt ihr, sei nicht wahr ;  
 Was ihr nicht wägt, hat für euch kein Gewicht,  
 Was ihr nicht münzt, das, meint ihr, gelte nicht.”<sup>5</sup>

The higher spiritual sphere is for them non-existent. !

But we appeal from these false philosophies to a better and higher. We assert that we can have knowledge of real causes, and that we are thus brought out of the circle of sensation into that of spirit. We assert that even in the realm of phenomena the spiritual facts have quite as much right of existence as the facts



of sense, and that there is no reason in the nature of consciousness why we should give exclusive and fundamental validity to the latter.<sup>6</sup> Our spiritual experiences are quite as real as our sensible experiences, and as we know the material world through the latter, cognizing the cause in the effect, so we know the spiritual world through the former, self, our fellow-men, God.

The proof has already been given in the second lecture, and I will not repeat it here. But let me say before leaving the subject, that the earnestness and vigor of the assault made upon Christianity by the philosophies of which I have just spoken, is largely due to the fact that their advocates see clearly the inseparable union between Christianity and that philosophy which we have called theistic, or I might say, between Christianity and every form of spiritual philosophy. They stand or fall together. The spiritual philosophy and Christianity are not connected as foundation and superstructure, in such a way that you could destroy the superstructure and leave the foundation intact. Rather they are related as root and tree, reciprocally connected parts of the same organism, so united that if you destroy the tree the root will die. The fight of the positivist, agnostic, and materialist is not against the spiritual philosophy in its unchristian forms, as it is not against natural religion, but against spiritualism and theism as represented in Christianity. Let them succeed in disproving the spiritualistic and theistic basis of Christianity, and their work is done.

Thus, without intending it, these philosophers pay the highest tribute to the truth of Christianity. The experience of the Christian carries with it the strongest positive proof of the spiritual philosophy and of theism,



and so the most powerful refutation of the philosophy of sense. The man who has passed through the great crisis of conversion and has emerged into the realm of the Christian realities knows by the best and most certain evidence that he himself is a spirit, and that there is an absolute Spirit, as he knows also that he is one of a great realm of finite spirits. It is an evidence that satisfies his intellect as completely as it does his heart. He even gains an invincible proof of the existence of a material world. Christianity is necessarily realistic, and its peculiar experience is the great evidence of the truth of realism. With truth Frank declares, "For the Christian, by virtue of his faith, by virtue of all that makes him a Christian, the objective reality, in the first place, of the spiritual world in which he lives, and with this at the same time also of the physical world, is decided."<sup>7</sup> The opponent has no arguments at his disposal to shake this evidence. The irrefutable counter-argument which the Christian brings is his own knowledge. If the materialist or agnostic insist that they have no such knowledge, the Christian declares that they may have it if they will. Let them once put themselves in the position to make trial of the Christian offer, testing its truth by fair experiment, and they will obtain an evidence of the existence of God, and of their own free personality as related to God—yea, also of the existence of the world itself—which will be indubitable.

II. This brings us to the second objection, namely, that our evidence is based on a private and particular experience.

This is a plausible but very superficial objection. It implies, in the first place, an entire misunder-



ing of the nature of the experimental evidence. That this evidence should be confined to a part of mankind is seen to be necessary as soon as we examine it. It is based upon the actual experience of redemption. But redemption is a change of the man from sin to holiness, from a wrong relation to God to a right relation to him. It implies the presence and efficiency of God's redemptive grace. It is accomplished only through the activity of the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. In order to become the subject of redemption, a man must pass through the great change of regeneration or conversion, and actually and consciously enter the sphere in which Father, Christ, and Spirit perform their work of grace. If all men are sinners—and that is one of the essential presuppositions of Christian experience—only those who have been born again can possess the evidence of which we are speaking. It is utterly impossible to attain it in any other way.

This, however, is wholly reasonable. It corresponds to the method of all practical or experimental evidence. There is only one way in which alleged facts or truths can be thus tested, and that is by conforming to the conditions under which experiment is possible. Only those who conform to these conditions secure the evidence. Others may accept it at second-hand upon the testimony of men who have tried, but this second-hand knowledge involves only probability, not certainty. The objection, if admitted as valid, would do away with the larger and more important portion of human knowledge. For the field of knowledge is practically unlimited and only a part of it explored by any one individual, while the fields into which the one enters may be wholly unknown to others. Cardinal



Newman expresses the truth when he says, "The certainties of the sciences are in the possession of a few countries only, and for the most part only of the educated classes in those countries; yet the philosophers of Europe and America would feel certain that the earth rolled round the sun, in spite of the Indian belief of its being supported by an elephant with a tortoise under it."<sup>8</sup>

Let us look for a moment at this particularism of human knowledge. Take the special knowledge in any branch of physical science. How many men are able to look with the astronomer through his telescope and spectroscope, and to follow him in his complicated mathematical calculations based upon the data thus obtained? Yet what would be said of the layman who wished to discard the facts of astronomy because the knowledge of them is confined to the few? "I have never seen this substance or that in the sun; therefore it is not in the sun. This so-called man of science makes some strange assertions on the subject, but the knowledge he claims is private and particular, and therefore does not count for me!" What kind of reasoning is that? who would accept it for a moment? The laws and facts of political economy demand careful personal investigation. Shall the man who has never had the slightest practical knowledge of commerce and trade deny the accepted principles of the science, held by all the schools, whatever their other differences, on the ground that they are matters for the expert and therefore he is shut off from them? Or, to take an instance from a sphere lying closer to our subject: Shall the man who has been brought up a waif, without parents, amid vicious surroundings, who has never



known the tender influences of home, declaim against the existence of affection in the closer relations of life, on the ground that he never had the experience and that only a part of mankind lay claim to happy homes?

The truth is, this particularism of knowledge is to be found everywhere. Without it the world would be one dead level of ignorance; science, art, philosophy, morals, religion, would lose their fair and ample proportions, and shrink into meagre insignificance; human attainment would be cut down to the level of the lowest minds; and human progress would cease altogether. The fact that the Christian experience is confined to a part of mankind does not in any way diminish its claims to credence.

But I would not be understood to place Christian experience upon the same level, in respect to its particularism, with other kinds of knowledge. The obstacles which stand in the way of special knowledge in other departments of human investigation are not present here. Though it has its particularism, yet there is a true sense in which it is universal.

In the first place, it is rooted in the nature of man and in the universal religious experience. There is thus a universal element in it, since there is in every soul a point of attachment upon which it may lay hold. This is the meaning of Tertullian's affirmation respecting the *anima naturaliter Christiana*.<sup>9</sup> Every man can find in himself, if he will look, the basis upon which Christianity builds, and from the nature of the foundation he can learn enough of the superstructure to make the assertion of entire ignorance respecting it untrue. God reveals himself to every soul, and every soul knows itself to be sinful and guilty before God,



and in need of redemption, a need that Christianity professes to meet and satisfy.

There is also sufficient provisional evidence in its favor to afford a basis for trial. Whatever may be the case in heathen lands, in Christian countries the Gospel is known and preached to all. The way of salvation is made plain. The historical and rational evidences for the truth of Christianity, which are open to all men, are everywhere known. If they do not afford that certainty which can come through trial alone, they furnish grounds of high probability for the truth of Christianity. Moreover, the inquirer has the testimony of believers, not only of individuals but also of the whole body of Christians. This ought to have its influence upon him. In every other department of human knowledge we give a large place to the testimony of men whom we have reason to believe reliable. That was a wise saying of Aristotle, "We are bound to give heed to the undemonstrated sayings and opinions of the experienced and aged, not less than to demonstrations; because, from their having the eye of experience, they behold the principles of things." *Cuique in arte sua credendum est.*<sup>10</sup> The experience of others thus becomes the bridge over which we pass to an experience of our own. If we have reason to believe the men to be trustworthy witnesses, we do not hesitate to accept their testimony, and often even to stake our lives upon its truth.

Now the Christian's testimony with respect to the things he has known in his own experience ought to have the highest value. The testimony of the Christian church, the body of believers, has the highest weight. Baxter puts the case truly: "There is so



much in it [Christianity] for the use of others, as should move them [those not Christians] to make trial of that doctrine and religion which others profess to receive such effects from ; especially, considering first, that they are sober and credible persons, and not light, deluded, vain, fantastical people only, that so profess ; and if such testimonies shall be refused, and that of so many thousand persons of all degrees, ages, and sexes, and that in all countries and times, and that in a matter of fact, or about the inward experience of their own souls ; what testimony then should be regarded ? And how would human converse be maintained, and human affairs be transacted, if such testimonies as these should be judged invalid ? ” <sup>11</sup>

It remains to be added that Christian experience is universal in the sense that it is accessible to all. If there were any barrier in the way of entering the new life, the case would be different. But there is no such barrier. It is true that the Christian experience cannot be had, unless the conditions of Christianity are complied with ; this, as was said a few moments ago, is necessary from the nature of the case. But the gateway that leads to the kingdom of heaven, though narrow, is open to all. The evidence of Christian experience is universally valid, though men do not universally avail themselves of it. <sup>12</sup> The question whether they shall have it or no lies in their own choice. They may have it if they will.

III. Here, then, we are confronted by the next objection, which is directed against the Christian requirement that the will should be submitted in order to enter into the new life. This is said to beg the whole question. Of course, if we begin by the re-



nunciation of our wills, any belief, however preposterous, is possible.

But in spite of the plausibility with which the objection is urged, we deny its force. That the evidence should be accessible only through an act of will is perfectly reasonable; indeed, it is implied in all that has been already said with respect to the nature of Christian experience and the evidence founded on it. And though such an act of will is peculiarly appropriate in the religious sphere, it is also needful for the attainment of all practical or experimental evidence in every department of human investigation or activity. Even in physical science such voluntary entrance into the experimental sphere is needful. The great obstacle in the way of scientific progress is the prejudice and unwillingness which prevent men from fairly putting the facts to the test of experiment. It was to this influence of the will that Lord Bacon had reference when he said that "the several classes of idols and their equipage . . . must be renounced and put away with a fixed and solemn determination, and the understanding thoroughly freed and cleansed; the entrance into the kingdom of man, founded on the sciences, being not much other than the entrance into the kingdom of heaven, whereinto none may enter except as a little child."<sup>13</sup> One of the most eminent of modern German logicians has written in a similar strain: "Science is much under the influence of the will; and the truth of knowledge depends upon the purity of conscience. The will has no power to resist scientific evidence; but scientific evidence is not obtained without the continuous loyalty of the will."<sup>14</sup>

And when it comes to other spheres, to politics and



social science, to metaphysics and moral philosophy, how are we to explain the enormous divergencies in the convictions and opinions of men, except upon the assumption that there are many who are unwilling to submit themselves to the tests by which alone the facts and laws can be known ?

It stands to reason, therefore, that thus alone can the knowledge upon which the evidence we are considering rests be acquired. Here, indeed, a higher and more complete surrender of the will is required. It is not merely a submission of the intellect to truth, but of the whole man, intellect, sensibility, will, to God, to be regenerated, justified, sanctified, and glorified. But the principle is the same, and the objection has no more validity here than in any other department of human knowledge.

After what has been said in the previous lectures there is no danger of misunderstanding what is involved in this act of will. We do not understand by faith—as is the case with the Roman Catholics and, though more in the past than the present, with many Protestants—the voluntary acceptance of a system of doctrine without reference to the judgment of the intellect, or even in contradiction to it. Such abnegation of knowledge would not bring us to the higher knowledge out of which our evidence grows.<sup>16</sup> The faith by which we enter the Christian life and come into possession of the experimental truth is an act of personal trust in Christ, who is the door to the new sphere of experience. That the sinner may thus become a partaker of eternal life, an entire change must be wrought in his nature and relations. It is a change he cannot effect himself. It is offered to him as the free gift of



God on the ground of Christ's work and through the power of his Spirit. He must freely accept the gift if he will possess it.

In our modern philosophical discussions we have come to see, as never before, the importance of the will as a source of knowledge. Kant tried to prove that the theoretical reason gives us no knowledge respecting the highest realities, but he declared that when we turn from this unproductive region to that of the practical reason, that is, of the will as it stands related to the moral nature, the great facts of God, freedom, and immortality are revealed to us as necessary postulates. Kant did not, it is true, admit that these postulates give us knowledge in the true sense of the term. The most he is willing to say is that the postulates represent "thoughts the objects of which are not impossible."<sup>16</sup> The practical conduct of life requires that we should act as if these conceptions stood for reality. It cannot be said that Kant made good his position. The attempt to write "No thoroughfare" over the reason in its highest exercise was a failure. Moreover, the theoretical and the practical reason cannot be divorced from each other. But although Kant's main contentions failed, he nevertheless called attention to the hitherto largely neglected fact, that men may learn through the activity of the will facts that the intellect alone cannot discover. This is pre-eminently true in the moral and spiritual spheres. It is the truth our Saviour uttered when he declared, "He that willeth to do his will shall know of the doctrine" (John vii. 17). In this region it is true that he that asketh receiveth, he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened (Matt.



vii. 7, 8). The Saviour himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John xiv. 6). The kingdom of redemption is accessible only to the soul that is willing to put itself wholly at the Saviour's disposal to shape and change it as he will.

IV. Again, it is objected that the experience to which the Christian lays claim and upon which he bases his evidence is unintelligible. This objection is made sometimes contemptuously, sometimes earnestly, but always loudly. The Christian, it is said, with his "language of Canaan," talks in a way that ordinary people cannot understand. The so-called experience finds no analogy in the ordinary life of men. It is incredible, not to say absurd.

In answer to this objection, while admitting the truth, in part at least, of the charge, I affirm that the unintelligibility of the Christian experience to the uninitiated, so far from being an argument against it, is wholly reasonable. In order that we should understand any system of facts, we must have some basis for its understanding in our experience. It belongs to the nature of our finite knowledge that new truth can be grasped only as it has points of attachment in the facts with which we are acquainted. What is altogether new, that is, completely outside of the circle of our experience, is incredible. We are all familiar with the story related by Locke, in his famous Essay, of the King of Siam who was told by the Dutch ambassador that the water in his country became so hard in winter that "men walked upon it, and that it would bear an elephant if he were there." "To which," says the philosopher, "the King replied: 'Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I



looked upon you as a sober, fair man ; but now I am sure you lie.' ”<sup>17</sup> From the monarch's stand-point the conclusion was natural and inevitable. And even where men, on account of their respect for the character of others, or on the ground of other probable evidence, accept the truth that lies outside the sphere of their experience, it is measurably an unintelligent acceptance.

Now, in spite of the fact already noticed, that the unconverted man has provisional evidence sufficient to make it his duty to accept the Christian offer—evidence weighty enough to make his acceptance altogether reasonable—the experience must be to a great extent unintelligible before he accepts it. Sin has brought the race into such a state that the correlation between man's cognitive faculties and the spheres of knowledge open to them is disturbed. Christianity gives the only adequate explanation of this fact. If men were what they were made to be, they would be open to all kinds of knowledge equally. The knowledge of the world, of self, of their fellow-men, and of God, would stream in upon them with equal light and self-evidencing certainty. They would know divine things as easily and with as much assurance as they do sensible things.

But sin has brought in confusion and error. I do not say that this state of things is wholly due to personal sin ; that would not be true. It is due still more to the race-sin, which has entrenched itself everywhere in the world of men. Heredity and environment alike minister to sin and the disturbance in the soul which sin produces. Personal sin adds to the disturbance. Archbishop Leighton has said, “The stream of sin runs from one age into another, and every age makes



it greater, adding somewhat to what it receives, as rivers grow in their course by the accession of brooks that fall into them, and every man when he is born falls like a drop into this main current of corruption, and so is carried down with it ; and this by reason of its strength, and his own nature, which willingly dissolves into it, and runs along with it.”<sup>18</sup> It has thus come that the knowledge of God and divine things, which should be the surest of all our knowledge, is the least sure of all, and has been crowded into the background, as it were, of man’s thought. What he knows best is the world, the things of sense ; what he knows next best, or seems to know—for the lower knowledge must of necessity be inadequate without the higher—is self.

Accordingly, the unregenerate man is shut off from the highest knowledge. It is not only that his knowledge is imperfect, but also that his intellect is perverted. He may be the best and purest of men, viewed by the human standard, but while he remains unconverted the highest sphere is closed to him. He may, indeed, be influenced by the external evidence for the truth of Christianity, or by the testimony of those who have passed through the change of conversion, but he can form no intelligible conception of the nature of the experience. As Paul says, “The natural man,” that is, the man who is under the influence of the lower, sinful, unregenerate nature, the *psuche*, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; and he *cannot* know them, because they are spiritually judged” (1 Cor. ii. 14). Mark the “cannot ;” the unintelligibility is a necessary element in the spiritual condition of the unconverted man. And



what was true in the days of the Apostle is just as true to-day. The natural man, so long as he remains such, cannot understand. The centre of his being must be changed, and he must become a spiritual man, that is, one in whom the spirit, the *pneuma*, the higher or God-touched nature, in which the Holy Spirit dwells, is predominant. He must be brought into contact with God through Christ, his sins must be forgiven, his sinful inability must be removed, he must be united with the God-man, he must enter into communion with the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. Then his eyes will be opened and he will see these things as they are. He cannot do it otherwise. Reason is incompetent to work its way through the maze without divine help.

When a man has come into actual, experimental contact with the Christian realities, then reason joyfully fulfils her office, but until then she has nothing upon which to work. As we have seen, reason does not create the knowledge of real existence. This must come to her from without. It is as useless for her to try to evolve the spiritual world of truth out of her own resources as it would be to try in the same way to evolve the physical world. For reason to know and understand either of these worlds, it is needful for her to be in contact with it.<sup>19</sup>

Upon this point the Christian ought to have the full courage of his convictions. It is not easy to do so. He is held back alike by his sense of his own imperfections and his charity toward his fellow-men. There is something in the facts as I have just stated them that is repugnant to the unconverted man; all the more so if he be a truth-seeking man of philosophical



mind, proud of his candor and strong in his morality. The Christian claim seems to him arrogant and fanatical. His feelings revolt against a classification which places him, so far as the highest knowledge is concerned, in a lower category than the most ignorant old woman who has passed through this alleged Christian experience, or the most abandoned criminal who has become, as he claims, converted. If he is a man who is not only a truth-seeker, but also self-righteous and contemptuous toward those of less attainments in worldly knowledge than himself, or those whose previous wrong-doing stands in strong contrast to his own morality, his repugnance to the Christian assertion that he is a sinner, resting under God's displeasure, and for this reason debarred from the highest knowledge, is still stronger.

You remember the answer the Duchess of Buckingham made to Lady Huntingdon, when the latter invited her to come and hear the great preacher, Whitefield: "It is monstrous," she said, "to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting."<sup>20</sup> The feeling is not always expressed as frankly as it was by this proud woman, but it is present in every age. It is one of the most common forms in which the unconverted heart manifests its actual condition—pathetic, not ludicrous, when we consider what it indicates. But I am inclined to think that Christians in these days, with a delicacy which in some respects does credit to them, but which is after all unjustifiable, are too shy of pressing the truth closely home upon their opponents. They fear they shall be setting themselves up as superior beings, if they fall back upon



their knowledge through Christian experience, and they would rather meet the objector with arguments drawn from history or the natural reason than with the real evidence upon which their faith rests. They are not above shrinking from the sneer with which they know they will be met; they are a little ashamed of what is most sacred to them.

The prime characteristic of our recent Christianity is its tolerance. Now undoubtedly tolerance is a Christian virtue, and like all Christian virtues very lovely. In times past it has been too much neglected. But remember that tolerance is not the only virtue in the Christian galaxy. Remember also the good ancient ethical doctrine of the golden mean. Virtues may become vices by excess as well as by defect. It is possible for tolerance to go to the extent of laxity. In our eagerness to admit the good there is in certain unbelievers whose names stand high on the rolls of science and literature we are often untrue to our faith. Because they are good, pure, honest, truth-seeking men, living according to their lights, we are afraid of setting ourselves self-righteously above them, when we assert that they are sinners and must be converted, if they are to be competent to speak with reference to this highest sphere of knowledge.

In saying this let me not be understood as judging them. God may see in them such a susceptibility for his grace that he may find ways of saving them. I humbly believe that he will ultimately save many such men, and that we—if God in his wonderful grace also saves us—shall see them in heaven bowing before the Lamb and rejoicing in the knowledge that comes through him. But what God may do with such men



is one thing, and our duty, as men intrusted with the Gospel of his grace, is another. What I assert is that while such men lack the higher experience, they are excluded from the realm of knowledge in which the humblest and most undeveloped Christian moves.

Let us be true to our convictions. It is not self-righteousness on our part. We are quite too self-conscious in such matters. The Christian has nothing to boast of, and just in proportion to the reality of his Christianity is he far from the danger of self-righteousness. It is God's grace which we are called upon to magnify, and the power of Christ by which the Christian, in himself no better than the unconverted man, perhaps far worse, has been laid hold of and lifted up into a new and higher life. We need not undervalue the achievements of the human intellect in the spheres of purely worldly knowledge, though doubtless these are due to the silent and unperceived influences of Christianity to a far greater extent than is commonly supposed.

Men like those of whom I spoke a moment ago are in their sphere truly great. God forbid that the Christian should detract one iota from their true worth! The truth they have brought to light is real truth. It is God's truth. They have taken one department of knowledge and made remarkable attainments in it. We ought gratefully to accept what they have given us, so far as it is truth, and to have the highest respect for their teachings on all the subjects with which they are conversant. But if such men are not converted men, brought under the power of Christ and living in communion with God through him, there is a true sense in which the least in the



kingdom of heaven is greater than they. Let such men come to the consideration of Christian truth in the same spirit with which they approach the facts of science and philosophy, and there can be no doubt that they will be satisfied.

We admit, then, the unintelligibility of the Christian experience to the unconverted man, and claim that it is not an objection to the reality of our evidence but a point in its favor. It must needs be so. "*O quam difficilis,*" says Lactantius, "*est ignorantibus veritas, et quam facilis scientibus!*" The proof that carries radiant conviction to the reason of the converted man must from the nature of the case be without force to the unconverted. But this evidence the inquirer may have if he will. We point to the open door, to the Christ who stands at it, and to the simple conditions of entrance. Our argument becomes an appeal: "We beseech you in Christ's behalf, Be ye reconciled to God. For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. v. 19, 20).

V. It is objected, in the next place, that the view of Christian experience and its evidence here presented gives rise to an irreconcilable dualism in human knowledge. Here are facts which to the ordinary intellect of man are unknowable and unintelligible, while in the religious sphere they are claimed to be true. This, our opponents declare, is a revival of the old doctrine, so often and so justly condemned, of the "double truth," namely, that a proposition may be at the same time false in philosophy and true in theology.

But, in reply, we assert that our view is very dif-



ferent from the doctrine of the double truth. This doctrine we reject as strenuously and with as much abhorrence as our adversaries can possibly do. It has always been a two-edged sword and has exposed those who have wielded it to the gravest dangers. One can never avoid the suspicion that it must be accompanied with more or less of insincerity. It is equally objectionable as maintained by men like Pomponatius and Bayle in the interests of scepticism, or Christians like Hamilton and Mansel in the interests of religion. The condemnation accorded to it by the Sorbonne in the fifteenth century was wholly justified and did not deserve the abuse heaped upon it by Luther. Pfleiderer has well called it "the fig-leaf of a shamefaced or still half-unconscious scepticism."<sup>1</sup> What it meant in the hands of the English philosophers of whom I have spoken is shown by the use made of it by Herbert Spencer and his agnostic school.

I do not deny that Christians themselves have given more or less ground for the charge made against them in this objection. The Roman Catholic doctrine that the theological system of the church is to be received in the bulk on the authority of the church opens the way for such a dualism. For it may readily happen that what is thus received will contradict what the reason affirms. So the Protestant doctrine, so widely held, that we are to receive the system of doctrine on the bare authority of the Bible, leads to similar results.

But we present no such view as this. We declare that there is only one truth, though there are grades in the knowledge of that truth. If the man who stands outside of the sphere of the Christian facts uses his



reason directly upon them, instead of taking the more rational course of subjecting them to the test of experience, they will indeed be foolishness to him. But this is an unjustifiable use of his reason, like that of the unlearned man who attempts to criticise the truth known only to the man of science. The facts that are true to the converted man may appear false to the unconverted man, but it will be only because the latter is incompetent to judge.

The famous words of Tertullian, "*Credibile est, quia ineptum est; certum est, quia impossibile est,*"<sup>22</sup> express in paradoxical form the truth that the foolishness of the natural man is the reason of the spiritual man. But they are furthest from teaching the double truth. According to that most reprehensible doctrine, there are two realms of knowledge which stand in contradiction to each other. According to our doctrine, which is that of the Christian church in all ages, there is a realm of knowledge and a realm of ignorance, a realm of truth and a realm of error. The contradiction is in the man who attempts to view the truth from the stand-point of error. Let the scales drop from the eyes, and the contradiction vanishes. If the eye be single the whole body is full of light; but if the eye be evil it is all darkness.<sup>23</sup>

It is because philosophy is capable of being developed from the stand-point of the natural man, and is often so developed, that it seems to come into contradiction to theology, or to the facts of Christian experience upon which theology, in subordination to the teachings of revelation, is based. It is a mistake to suppose that the great fundamental problems can be successfully solved by the man who is in possession of



only a part of the facts of the universe. A man cannot philosophize in the highest sense and with success unless he has access to the highest sphere. The philosophy of the natural man will always be defective. But let philosophy be developed from the stand-point of Christian experience with its higher knowledge, and the case is wholly different.<sup>24</sup> Then there is no contradiction but only harmony.

“Philosophy baptized

In the pure fountain of eternal love  
Has eyes indeed ; and viewing all she sees,  
As meant to indicate a God to man,  
Gives him the praise, and forfeits not her own.”<sup>25</sup>

VI. An objection closely allied to the last affirms that in the evidence of Christian experience we found our alleged facts upon *feeling* rather than *knowledge*, upon *faith* in contradistinction from *reason*.

Here again it is to be admitted that a certain excuse for the objection has been afforded by the ill-judged representations of Christians themselves, not simple Christians giving account of the faith that is in them, but philosophical Christians endeavoring to give a scientific *rationale* of faith. Undoubtedly the systems of Jacobi and Schleiermacher in Germany are open to this objection. It was thus that Jacobi could say that he was “with the head a heathen and with the heart a Christian.” It was thus that Sir William Hamilton, after declaring the intellect impotent to discover God and freedom, fell back upon faith for the evidence of the truth which he could not relinquish, yet felt himself unable to prove.<sup>26</sup> The attempt of Kant to rescue by the practical reason the great truths of God, free-



dom, and immortality, which are undiscoverable by the theoretical reason, may fairly be placed in the same category.

But the retreat from the open field of the intellect into the stronghold of the feelings or of faith, however well meant, is a confession of defeat. It is not a defence but a surrender. It is a matter for profound congratulation that the best Christian thought of our age is thoroughly awake to the dangers of this doctrine and anxious to avoid even the appearance of advocating it.<sup>27</sup> Yet we must confess with regret that it still finds considerable acceptance among Christians who are too indolent to work their way through to a valid philosophical defence of Christianity, and therefore avail themselves of this easy way of shirking the whole difficulty. It is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when sober-minded and rational Christians will be ashamed to have recourse to this device.

In the evidence of Christian experience, however, as it has been presented here, no such recourse has been had to feeling or faith, or, I might add, to the practical as distinguished from the theoretical reason. We employ the same faculties and the same methods of reasoning which we use in the other departments of human knowledge and investigation. The difference lies in the objects of knowledge and the consequent difference in the use of our faculties thus called for.

Our evidence does not rest upon feeling. We do, indeed, give this faculty a place, and that an important one, in our proof; but we are furthest from making it the organ of religious or Christian knowledge.<sup>28</sup> Feeling is a source of knowledge, but it is not a faculty of knowledge. There is a great difference between the



two, and one which, in the interests of clear thinking, ought always to be borne in mind. There is only one faculty of knowledge, and that is the intellect. If the sensibility were such, we should classify it as an intellectual power. Sensibility and will are sources of knowledge but not faculties of knowledge. The intellect is both a faculty and a source of knowledge. That is to say, the intellect can use the sensibility and will as channels of knowledge, or it can use its own processes as such. Modern psychology has laid increasing emphasis upon the sensibility and the will as sources of knowledge, a fact which the older philosophy, with that rationalistic tendency which was characteristic of it, almost entirely neglected. But the new psychology, like the old, in its most generally accepted representatives recognizes only one faculty of knowledge, namely, the intellect.

As we have seen, our Christian knowledge is derived from the intellect, the will, and the feelings, as they all bear witness to the presence and activity of the Christian realities. It is because the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit affect us in all the departments of our composite spiritual nature, that we affirm their existence and reality. Our Christian certainty rests upon the synthesis of the religious impressions made upon all our faculties, and the testing and investigation of these impressions by the processes of reflective thought acting in the light and by the aid of the rational intuitions. In this process feeling has an important but subordinate place. I think that a thorough and careful analysis of the Christian consciousness, especially in the initial experience of the life of faith, will show that the effects of the Christian reali-



ties upon our wills are of prime importance, while those upon our intellects come next, and those upon the feelings last. Feeling, at least in its higher exercises, is chiefly the result of the action of the other faculties, and reached mediately through their action. Moreover, all through the process the especial organ of knowledge is our one faculty of knowledge, namely, the intellect, working through the various functions of self-consciousness or the inner sense, the rational intuitions, and reflective thought.

The only difference between the apprehension of Christian truth and that by which we attain knowledge of the facts of the material world consists in the different objects apprehended, the different parts of our nature affected, and the consequent difference in the method of thought. The things of the material world affect us through the organs of sense; the Christian realities, whether they are mediated by the senses or not, affect us directly through our spiritual susceptibilities. We apprehend the impressions of sense through the faculty of sense-perception; we perceive the spiritual impressions through the inner sense. The perception once accomplished, thought with the aid of the rational intuitions does the rest. We know the spiritual facts, therefore, in precisely the same rational way as we know the material facts. No new faculties are used or required. We could not use them if we had them. So far from trusting to mere feeling, we give this power the smallest and most subordinate place.

Before leaving this branch of the subject, I ought to call attention to a view which is held by some Christian philosophers, who are quite as decided as we in denying that the feelings, as distinguished from the in-



tellec[t], are the faculty of religious knowledge, but who use a terminology which lays them open to this charge. They hold that the raw material of our physical and spiritual knowledge is properly called feeling, and they teach that from this undifferentiated substratum of knowledge the thinking mind derives by a rational process the religious facts and truths. An able American representative of this view says, "Our point of mental departure, both in science and religion, alike in physics and metaphysics, is feeling. Our knowledge of the external world is given in and through sensation. Our consciousness is affected so and so; these affections or sense-perceptions are grouped in our various conceptions of things; are combined, corrected, and held fast in various judgments and beliefs with regard to an external world."<sup>29</sup> Again he says, "The perennial source of religion, opened afresh in every new-born soul, is the feeling of absolute dependence."<sup>30</sup> And once more, "I maintain that the religious feeling involves perception, and is, therefore, the valid source of theology."<sup>31</sup> According to this view, therefore, feeling is the crude effect in consciousness of all objective impressions. Accordingly, spiritual facts are no more based upon feeling than material facts. Whether this is properly called feeling is a question which it seems to me must be answered in the negative. But I mention the view not for the sake of criticising it, but rather to claim it as in substance the same as that which I have presented.

But if it be not true that our evidence is based upon feeling as distinguished from the knowledge of the intellect, neither is it true that it is based upon faith as opposed to reason. I admit that faith has been often so



represented as to give color to this view. If the definition to which I referred a little while ago in speaking of the double truth is correct, if faith is the acceptance of a doctrinal system upon authority, then it surely might be placed in antithesis, or even opposition, to the acceptance of truth on the ground of the free, unconstrained assent of the intellect, moved to it by rational evidence. But this is not the true idea of religious faith, as we saw when first examining the Christian experience and its evidence. Faith is primarily trust. Its object is not the truth but a person. It involves knowledge and feeling, but it is in its essence an act of the will. Such it is in the ordinary relations of life, in the child's faith in its parents, or the faith of the man of business in his fellow-men of business. The object of Christian faith is God in Christ, whom we trust for our salvation, putting ourselves into his hands and submitting ourselves to him to be his children and followers, intrusting to him our temporal and eternal interests.

Now in no respect does the Christian fly from reason to faith. He does, indeed, as we noticed also when considering the doctrine of the double truth, reject the dictates of the natural reason, which would dissuade him from accepting Christ's offer and making trial of the Christian life, and follows the directions of the Gospel and the leadings of the Holy Spirit in his soul. But this is the true use of reason, like that use of reason which makes the seeker after truth in other departments of human investigation turn from the suggestions of sloth or prejudice and submit himself to the conditions by the observance of which alone the experimental verification of truth is possible.



Moreover, by his faith the Christian is brought to a still higher exercise of reason. The reason of the Christian life is a regenerate reason. The defects which inhere in it in the natural man are so far removed that it is enabled to attain its true exercise, from which sin has debarred it; and more and more in the Christian life, as the process of sanctification advances, it becomes what it was meant to be, the faculty not only of sensible knowledge but also of the higher spiritual knowledge. In this sense faith, so far from being opposed to reason, is the condition of the right use of reason. The maxim of Augustin, which Anselm echoes, "*Fides præcedit intellectum*," thus becomes true.

Then, in the redeemed life faith and reason stand in the closest and most loving union. No man uses his reason more truly or more fully than the Christian. The New-Testament never sets faith in opposition to knowledge. The only antithesis it makes is between faith and sight. Our faith is a trust in unseen Realities. But they are not less truly known because they are not seen. In the higher state there is to be a new relation to the Christian Realities; they are no longer to be seen as in a mirror darkly, but face to face. But the antithesis is not between ignorance and knowledge; it is between a lower kind of knowledge and a higher.

There is, however, another meaning attached to the objection. There are some who teach the existence of a faith-faculty by which we apprehend the things unseen and eternal. But no such faculty exists or could exist.<sup>32</sup> There is no room for it in the human mind. Such a faculty, if it actually existed, would be another kind of intellect, having to do with things above sense. But our ordinary intellect is quite sufficient for this



purpose. To multiply faculties beyond the facts is a confession of failure to find any rational basis for religious knowledge. Nothing is more opposed to the simplicity of Christian experience than such a method. The Christian knowledge is the common knowledge in the sphere of the regenerate soul. The illumination of the intellect by the divine Spirit, and the new world revealed in conversion, imply no change in the groundwork of the mind.

The Christian is tempted, in his conviction of the greatness of the difference between the knowledge of the natural man and that of the believer, to assert some essential change in the soul itself, if not in its faculties, at least in the basis of those faculties. But this is a temptation which should be sternly resisted, as entirely lacking in scriptural and experimental evidence. Our great American theologian in his wonderful work on the "Religious Affections"—a work which ought to be rescued from the unmerited neglect into which it has fallen—has not wholly avoided this temptation. He teaches that regeneration produces in the soul a "taste or relish for spiritual things," which is not, indeed, a new faculty but a new principle of nature or new spiritual sense, which stands in the same relation to the exercises of the soul on the spiritual side, as the organs of sense, or the sensorium, on the side turned toward material things. He says, "If there be in the soul a new sort of exercise which it is conscious of, which the soul knew nothing of before, and which no improvement, composition, or management of what it was before conscious or sensible of, could produce, or anything like it, then it follows that the mind has an entirely new kind of perception or sensation ;



and here is, as it were, a new spiritual sense that the mind has, or a principle of a new kind of perception or spiritual sensation, which is in its whole nature different from any former kinds of sensation of the mind, as tasting is diverse from any of the other senses. . . . So that the spiritual perceptions which a sanctified and spiritual person has are not only diverse from all that natural men have, after the manner that the ideas or perceptions of the same sense may differ one from another, but rather as the ideas and sensations of different senses do differ." He goes on to explain: "This new spiritual sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new faculties, but are new principles of nature. . . . By a principle of nature in this place I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul. . . . So this new spiritual sense . . . is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding." <sup>23</sup>

But there is no evidence, except in a figure of speech, for the existence of any such new sense for spiritual things. The susceptibility for the divine life is innate. No soul but possesses it. It is, indeed, perverted by sin and shriveled by disuse. But it still exists. What the divine grace does is to restore it to its normal exercise and then present to it its appropriate objects.

VII. Another objection is derived from the relation in which Christian experience and its evidence stand to the Bible. This book, it is said, describes a certain kind of experience which it declares to be essential to



salvation. Christians, under the influence of this book and of their own imaginations, think that they find a similar experience in themselves. Or, if they do not actually think so, yet they feel obliged to act and speak as if they thought so. If the Bible laid down a different rule, they would have a different experience. The evidence for the truth of Christianity is derived from the correspondence between the Bible and the experience, which is thus a matter that is susceptible of an entirely natural explanation.

In answering this objection let us not be tempted to deny the true relation in which the experience of the Christian stands to the objective revelation, and so to the Bible. This relation is essential. Christian experience would be impossible without the objective revelation. The latter is the *conditio sine qua non* of a normal Christian experience. It is also the constant interpreter and guide of that experience.

But this is far from being the whole. When the soul has put the Bible to the test by closing with the offers of the Gospel, it attains a first-hand knowledge that is in a sense independent of the objective revelation. In the first stage the inquirer believes on the strength of outward testimony. He is like the Samaritans who believed on Christ because of the word of the woman, who testified, "He told me all things that ever I did." In the second stage the knowledge is personal and immediate, like the belief of those Samaritans who heard his word and said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (John iv. 39-42).

We deny in the strongest terms that Christians, after



they have entered by repentance and faith into the new life, merely transfer to themselves in imagination or under the pressure of Christian opinion the experience described in the Bible. Some may do so, for it is not to be denied that there are those connected with the Christian church who are Christians only in name. But this is farthest from being the case with the true Christians, who alone should be brought into account here. They have an immediate and personal knowledge of the reality of redemption and of the existence and presence of the Holy Spirit, the Christ, and the Father. This is no imagination. They apply to it all the tests which philosophy and science furnish, and the experience still shows itself to be true. Here are effects which reveal the presence of the divine Cause as truly as another class of effects in their consciousness reveal a physical cause. To say that they are following mere imaginations when they affirm the existence of the divine life within and the presence of its divine Authors is absurd.

It is true that the Christian joyfully accepts the evidence derived from the correspondence between the Bible and his personal experience, but it is because he knows the experience to be real, not because the Bible tells him that his experience ought to be of this character. Indeed, when he has once tasted for himself that the Lord is gracious, his relation to the Bible becomes a wholly new one. He now believes the Bible not only on grounds of probable evidence but also because of his own experience. It is for this reason that he trusts it as his guide and counsellor, and looks to it for direction in all the emergencies of life. Because he has tested it in the main point, that is, in its prem-



ise of the new life through faith in Christ, he is able to trust it in other things, and cannot doubt that it is true in those matters which he has not yet put to the test.

We therefore wholly deny that the Christian transfers the contents of the Bible ready-made to his experience. On the contrary, it is by his experience that he verifies them and obtains the undeniable evidence of their truth.

VIII. Finally, it is objected that the devotees of other religions which Christianity declares to be false have as undoubting a trust in the reality and truth of their beliefs as the Christian.

Granting that this were true, it would not invalidate the reality and truth of our evidence. In a world of falsehood and error every truth has its opponents who are quite sincere in their antagonism. It is not Christianity alone that is thus confronted. Philosophy, political economy, physical science, can bring forward no doctrines that have not been or are not now assailed by men quite as honest as those who represent what may be called orthodoxy in these departments of knowledge and investigation. But this is no disproof of the truth. It is in the defence of itself against such opposition that the truth vindicates itself most triumphantly. Who would think for a moment that the accepted results of modern physical science were invalidated by the honestly held and earnestly advocated notions of uncivilized men? Who would think of disproving the truth of modern medical theories by pointing to the fact that Chinese physicians deal in charms and incantations with equal belief in their efficacy? The question is not to be decided by the strength and



honesty of opposing convictions, but by the evidence which can be furnished for the truth of those convictions.

But I am not willing to admit that the followers of other religions maintain their beliefs with a confidence like that of the Christian. I do not deny that there are many professed Christians who stand on the level of the heathen with respect to their beliefs, or even below the better class of heathen. There are many who bear the Christian name upon whom Christian conviction sits very lightly. The reason is that such persons are without the peculiar experience of Christianity. They have a form of godliness but not the power thereof. "We do make a great difference," says Richard Baxter, replying to the objection before us, "among Christians themselves, between those that believe and love Christ merely upon such prejudice, custom, or interest; and those that believe in him and love him sincerely, and upon right grounds."<sup>34</sup>

We do not deny that the heathen have some good and true grounds for their beliefs. The ethnic religions, even in their most corrupt forms, contain much truth, and there is no reason to doubt that the followers of these religions who use the light they have, come into a real contact with God, which gives them a true experimental evidence of the truth of religion. It is on account of this truth and reality that men hold to the so-called false religions with so much tenacity, in spite of the error which they contain. I am quite willing to admit that the sincerity and tenacity of belief which we find among such heathen puts to shame the indifference of our lukewarm Christians. But I do not for a moment admit that the assurance of the true Christian is on a level with that of even the best heathen.



The difference in the things believed and in the grounds upon which the belief rests makes the two cases wholly different. "Men of other religions," says Baxter once more, "have no such object for faith and love, and no faith or love for such an object."<sup>36</sup> The intelligent faith of the Christian believer in God and Christ, based upon first-hand knowledge of the facts, is altogether different from the faith of the heathen, which, granting it a substratum of reality, is mixed with error and corrupted by superstition. The Christian is not an unthinking devotee; he is an intelligent man who knows what he believes and the reasons why he believes it, and who therefore is strong in his certainty of the facts upon which his religion is based.

Looking back now over the course of the present lecture, I think we may say with truth that the Christian has no reason to fear the objections which philosophical unbelief can bring against the reality of his Christian faith. He is not afraid to meet the challenge to subject his experience to the tests of reason. All that he asks is a fair investigation, conducted on principles correspondent with the nature of the subject. To him Christianity is the highest truth. His only fear is that he himself in his ignorance or unskilfulness may not state the proof at its full worth. He knows that the truth is on his side. So he is willing to enter patiently into the discussion with the philosophical sceptic and to answer his objections one by one. But most of all it is his joy to show to his fellow-Christians, who like him are firm in the faith, but desire to see clearly the evidence on which it rests, the strength of the foundations, divine and invincible, of their Christian life.



## LECTURE VIII.

### THEOLOGICAL OBJECTIONS.

THE objections considered in the last lecture are urged by men who call in question not only the Christian experience but also the common religious experience. I wish now to examine the objections of those who admit that there is truth and reality in religion, but who, for one reason or another, are unwilling to accept the account of the Christian experience and its evidence that has here been given. In calling the former class of objections philosophical, and that which we are about to consider theological, I do not mean to imply that we shall now leave philosophical questions altogether behind us. I have meant by the use of the terms merely to indicate the exclusively philosophical position of the one class of objectors, and the predominantly theological stand-point of the other.

The theological objections themselves fall into two classes, according as they are advanced by the opponents or the friends of the orthodox system of Christian truth.

I. The unorthodox objection takes the general form that while a real truth underlies the Christian experience, the distinctively Christian elements in it have no objective reality. The Christian facts which, according to our belief, constitute the very essence of Chris-



tianity, viewed as a system of present, operative powers, have only a formal, and not a real, value. The evidence upon which we lay so much stress falls thus to the ground.

1. It is objected that the Christian doctrine of a supernatural regeneration and sanctification is without foundation. Men are indeed sinful, but they are capable, in the exercise of their own moral powers, of forsaking sin and obeying the law of conscience. This work involves no divine factors, except in so far as the subject of it is influenced by moral and religious truth, which has its origin in God and is guided by the divine providence. If this be the true view, Christianity carries with it no proof of such divine Realities as we claim to know.<sup>1</sup>

This is the objection of the *rationalist*—or I might say, to use a theological designation, of the Pelagian. It is connected with that deistical tendency which denies the distinction between the natural and Christian revelations, reduces Christian experience to natural religion, and makes natural religion itself a matter of merely intellectual belief, of notions rather than realities. Its few doctrines are excogitated by the independent and unaided power of the reason. God, immortality, obedience to the moral law, and future rewards and punishments form the meagre creed of this bare and cold theology. All the other elements of Christianity are held to be unreal and valueless, while Christianity itself is a mere “republication of the religion of nature,” of worth only so far as it serves to further emphasize the few great truths revealed through the world and man’s constitution.

The rationalism I have described is that of the last



century; but although as a system it has become to a great extent obsolete, it still exists as a tendency, widespread and active. Christianity meets the objection with an utter denial of its fundamental assertion, based upon indubitable facts of experience. It does not deny that there is a sense in which this assertion is justifiable, as it is certainly honest. From the stand-point of the natural man, who is outside of the distinctively Christian experience, the rationalistic doctrine seems true; man is capable in his own strength of attaining the perfection which is consonant with his nature.<sup>2</sup> But he who has had the Christian experience knows that this belief of the natural man is unfounded. There is only one way of escape from sin, and that is by the new birth and the forgiveness of sins. The believer has tried this way. He has experienced redemption. And no fact is more deeply impressed upon him than this, that here human power was helpless and divine power necessary. Moreover, regeneration and sanctification are facts in full view of his consciousness, and through them he is brought into contact with the divine Causes, the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father. The objection of the rationalist is simply that fundamental objection which has met us before in various forms, arising from the impossibility that the man who stands outside of the Christian experience should understand it or do it justice. The advocates of this view are doubtless good men. But they turn from the reality to the vain show which a proud and self-sufficient reason manufactures out of its own substance. To them the prophet's words apply: They forsake the fountain of living water and hew them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jer.



ii. 13). The Christian experience refuses to be evaporated in the alembic of a doctrine so shallow.

The rationalist, like the philosophical opponent of religion, denies that the Christian has any proof of a divine Power directly at work in his experience. He differs from the other in that he admits and asserts the existence of God. But by so doing he concedes all that we ask as the basis of our proof. Christian experience is a reality which demands explanation. If there be a God, he alone can be its Cause. "Newton," says Ueberweg, "did not merely show that the motions of the heavenly bodies, according to Kepler's three laws, could be explained with mathematical accuracy by the law of gravitation; he showed that a sufficient explanation could be given only on the presupposition of power which acts according to the laws of gravitation, and, consequently, that this cause which sufficed (*causa sufficiens*) to produce the effects, and which had been shown already to exist as an actual power in nature (*causa vera*) in the power of weight upon the earth, was the only one possible."<sup>3</sup> In a similar way we prove that the divine Cause, admitted by the rationalist, is the only possible cause of Christian experience.

2. It is objected that our view of Christian experience and its evidence involves an unwarrantable intrusion of metaphysics into the realm of religion. This objection has been urged from the side of Kant's moral rationalism, and more recently from that of Ritschl's theology. Let us look at it in both these forms.

We have seen that Kant denied the ability of the theoretical reason to attain to knowledge respecting the thing in itself. It has, indeed, its ideas of self, the



world, and God ; but these are wholly subjective. The ordinary metaphysics, which claims to give us a knowledge of objective reality, rests upon a delusion. But the practical reason has its rights as well as the theoretical. Though it cannot give us knowledge of supersensible things in the strict sense of the term knowledge, yet by its postulates of God, freedom, and immortality it lays the basis for religion. Religion, accordingly, starting as it does from the postulates of the practical reason, is a realm by itself, with its own laws and methods, wholly independent of metaphysics.

In his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*<sup>4</sup> Kant develops his theology. The voice of conscience, speaking to the soul in the thunder tones of the "categorical imperative," is the voice of God. It has absolute worth and authority. Man cannot disobey it without proving untrue to himself. Yet, as a matter of fact, all men do show themselves thus recreant. Kant teaches the existence in man of a "radical evil,"<sup>5</sup> in some respects approximating to the orthodox doctrine of original sin. All men are sinners ; all men need moral renovation. This is brought about by making the law of conscience the highest principle of action and living in conformity with it. The kingdom of God, that is, the fellowship of all true and good men who are laboring to carry out the law of right, is the sphere into which the man who is seeking moral renovation enters, and where he finds opportunity for the exercise of his moral powers.

The other and higher side of religion, communion with God, has no place in Kant's theology. This follows from the exclusion of metaphysics. Religion is to him morality known in its principles and carried



out in conformity with its postulates. He allows no place in the spiritual life for the distinctively Christian facts. His doctrine of radical evil is not matched by a doctrine of regeneration ; the sinner is to be his own saviour. To the person of Christ Kant seems, upon superficial examination, to attach considerable importance, but an understanding of his meaning compels a great abatement from our first impressions. He presents the doctrine of an "ideal Christ," or Son of God, who is neither more nor less than humanity considered as well-pleasing to God—a doctrine which reminds us of that held by the pantheist Spinoza.<sup>6</sup> In so far as this ideal finds illustration and enforcement in the life of Jesus of Nazareth the person of the latter has worth for us. How far the historical Jesus expressed the ideal Kant does not undertake to say.<sup>7</sup> This ideal Christ is the object of the believer's faith and the source of his moral life and progress. But the Son of God who dwells in the Christian remains an ideal, except in so far as he is realized in the believer's own moral growth ; he is not the personal, living God-man, the Author of the Christian's salvation, the ground of his justification, the warrant of his eternal hope. Of such a Being Kant knows nothing, as he knows nothing of the Christian truth of the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Religion for him is morality enforced by the postulates of the practical reason, and illuminated by the ideals which reason furnishes and historical Christianity more or less fully illustrates.<sup>8</sup>

The theology of the late Albrecht Ritschl, now in such high repute in Germany, is in some important features a revival of Kant's system.<sup>9</sup> It differs also, however, at essential points, and plainly shows the influence



of Schleiermacher and Lotze. Like Kant, Ritschl denies that metaphysics can be in any sense the source of religious knowledge. He repudiates natural theology altogether. We have no knowledge of the thing in itself. The idea of something behind sensation, which is its cause and source, of a substance underlying phenomena, is illusory. In truth, it is a trick of memory. We recall the various attributes of things known through past sensations, and unite them in the notion of a thing, which acquires a certain permanence in our thought. This notion we project into space and regard as the cause of the more fluent phenomena known immediately in sensation.<sup>10</sup> The so-called arguments for the divine existence carry us no farther than the world itself, and give us only the notion of the world with the abstraction of its attributes. The Absolute is thus merely a notion and cannot furnish the basis for religion.<sup>11</sup>

Ritschl also follows Kant in that when he finds no thoroughfare along the road of the theoretical reason, he turns in the direction of the practical side of man's nature. It is through the will that the practical work of life is done. Man finds himself in the midst of nature, which is under the control of necessity. But man is free. He is able to use nature and raise himself above it. This he does by acting in view of ends. This is what makes him a moral being. But how shall he attain the ends that are immanent in his nature? how shall he secure and maintain his supremacy over nature? how shall he reach his moral goal? Kant solved the moral problem by the postulates of the practical reason. Ritschl solves it by the fact of revelation. Jesus Christ is the answer to the moral ques-



tion. His person, life, and work are a revelation of God. He makes known to us God and the great truth and fact of the kingdom of God. God is love. The kingdom of God is the reign of love among men. This is the chief end of man, by pursuing which he is able to attain his moral destination. But it is more than this: it is the chief end of God's activity as revealed by Christ, and the chief end of Christ's own life.

It was by the unity of Christ with God in the purpose of the kingdom that he maintained that solidarity with God in virtue of which the Scripture writers call him divine. His life was sinless. Throughout it he maintained perfect trust in God and superiority to the world, in spite of suffering and, at the last, of death. Both life and death were redemptive. In one sense we may regard him as a high-priest, the representative of men; God saw mankind in him. But in the truest sense the atonement is a manifestation of the divine love. Christ reveals God as love; in him we know God. Into the metaphysical basis of the Saviour's manifestation we may not inquire. The essential divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity find no place in the system. Miracles, likewise, are left unexplained so far as their relation to natural law is concerned; their value in the Christian system lies in the fact that they are remarkable manifestations of God's providential care for believers.

The divine grace imparts forgiveness upon the simple condition of faith, wholly apart from works. Upon this point Ritschl asserts the accepted Protestant doctrine. When we accept in faith the teachings of Christ and enter into the community of Christians, the church, we receive the forgiveness of sins, and the



divine purpose, that is, the kingdom of God, becomes our chief end. Thus we are delivered from our false dependence upon the world and brought into our true relation of dependence upon God, whose providence we know to be on the side of those who are laboring for him.

Ritschl does not teach the present work of Christ in the soul. Neither does he teach in any true sense a communion of the soul with God such as Christian experience asserts. How Christ at present stands related to the church is not, according to this theory, a matter of importance. It is through his life, his historical manifestation, that he influences his followers to-day.<sup>12</sup> Ritschl says: "Apart from the medium of God's Word and the exact recollection of this personal revelation of God in Christ, there is no personal relation between a Christian and God."<sup>13</sup> An interesting controversy has been carried on in late years in Germany upon this subject, in which Herrmann, one of Ritschl's most noted disciples, has taken a prominent part. It is clear from the work this theologian has written on the subject—"Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott"<sup>14</sup>—that the Christian's certainty of an actual and present relation to God is regarded as based upon what Christ did and said when he was on earth, and not upon any present consciously recognized relation of the believer to God through Christ.<sup>15</sup>

It is evident that this theory dispenses with all speculative evidence for the truth of Christianity. Its proof is wholly practical.<sup>16</sup> Because the Christian system, as it comes to us in and through Christ, enables us to attain our true end as moral beings, we know it to be true, or, what is the same, we know it to be a



revelation. The divine existence and all the Christian facts and truths, so far as this theology teaches them, are thus verified.

I have stated this view at length on account of the great importance it has assumed in recent times. I pass now to consider the validity of the objection based upon it and the doctrine of Kant. We freely admit that the main contention of the objectors is true. We concede the important part played by metaphysics in our evidence of Christian experience, but we deny that it is unwarranted. On the contrary, we claim that there can be no evidence of the truth of either religion or Christianity without the help which metaphysics affords. All knowledge, we insist, is one. God does not deprive us of the use of our reason when he brings us into the highest relation to himself.

The attempt to exclude metaphysics is suicidal. It leaves religion without any support, a mere castle in the air. It is folly to think that the great facts which constitute religion can be proved in any other way. The earnestness with which the moral law is maintained in these systems is certainly to be commended. But morality is not religion, nor can it exist without the sanctions of religion.

Kant's doctrine gives us religion only in name. The postulates of the practical reason are not knowledge. They give us no objective reality. They are ideas, not facts.<sup>17</sup> But religion cannot consist in subjective ideas. It must have realities, and actual contact with those realities. When you cut away its theoretical basis, you destroy its root and it soon withers away. The meagre Christian element in the Kantian system fares



no better. The ideal Son of God, as he has no personal reality, has no redemptive power.

Ritschl's theology is on a higher level. Its assertion of the historical reality and essential importance of Christ as a revelation of God cannot be too highly commended. It finds a place for a large amount of the distinctively Christian truth. But at the bottom it labors under the same fatal difficulties as the Kantian theology. Again we have a castle in the air. A revelation cannot be known as such unless it is based on some kind of natural knowledge. The assertion that God cannot be known by reason and yet can be known by revelation is preposterous, as preposterous as it would be to assert the same of self, or the world, or our fellow-men. Moreover, the denial of metaphysics emasculates the Christian system, excluding from it all that is highest. The Christian Realities are made unreal and communion with them rendered impossible. After all, what is left is scarcely more than the old moral rationalism, with a historical rather than an ideal basis.

The much-vaunted practical proof also fails. Such proof has a high value when it is connected with the theoretical evidence, but standing alone it carries no weight with it. It does not prove the objective reality of religion or Christianity. All that it can do is to show the regulative value in morals of certain ideals. It is just here that Ritschl is less consistent than Kant. The latter did not pretend to get beyond postulates and ideals. But Ritschl attempts to find in the practical proof an objective religious basis, a proof not of the regulative value of ideas but of the actual truth of a revelation.<sup>19</sup>



The positive evidence for the validity of our position has been given already. I have shown the truth of natural theology, the confirmation given to it by Christian experience, and the evidence of the reality of the higher Christian facts that experience affords. In all this we have made abundant use of metaphysics, and we insist that we have had the full right to do so.

3. It is objected, once more, that our view mistakenly assumes the correspondence of the symbolical representations of religion with the objective reality. As the last objection found fault with us for introducing too much philosophy into our evidence, this complains that we have too little.

This is the pantheistic objection. Christianity is true, it is said, so far as it reveals to us eternal truths and facts of reason, but the forms under which the revelation is made are imperfect and not susceptible of the explanation the Christian gives of them. According to the pantheistic view, the world in its history is a continuous unfolding of the Absolute. The divine Spirit comes to consciousness in the human spirit; self-consciousness and God-consciousness are therefore identical. Religious experience is real, because it is the result of the immediate impression of the divine Spirit upon the human spirit, as they meet in man's consciousness. Let a man go down into the depths of his soul, and there he finds God. God is continually with him, conditioning him, affecting him, impelling him. He is a part of the divine process and the divine Idea is realized in and through him.

Now in the progress of the world-process the Divine is more and more fully realized in the human, and more and more fully manifests itself in the human conscious-



ness. Accordingly, history is the progressive revelation of God to men. This divine revelation comes into the sphere of consciousness in the form of mental representations or *Vorstellungen*,<sup>19</sup> which are imperfect symbols or media of the idea or reality. In the earlier stages of the development of religion these representations are imperfect, rude, and inadequate. As, with equal pace the development of man and the revelation of the Divine proceed, the representations become higher and more adequate. Christianity is the perfect or absolute religion; in it the truth of the Divine comes to its completion; it gathers into itself the fragmentary truth existing in the other religions, and supplements and completes it. It is the crowning of the divine revelation. But Christianity still makes use of symbolical representations, beyond and behind which the philosopher must pass, though he cannot wholly dispense with them. To this realm of representation, of figurate rather than literal truth, belong the distinctively Christian realities. Especially Jesus the Christ, as known in Christian experience, belongs to the region of the representation rather than to that of the pure idea.

Jesus, according to this view, was in a true sense the God-man. But all men are God-men; the Divine is incarnate in every man. Jesus stands to us as pre-eminently the example and symbol of the union between God and men which is progressively realized in the world-process. Consequently we give to his person an especial significance in connection with our religious experience. Inasmuch as the God-consciousness existed in a perfect form in him, and by it he was able to overcome the world and to rise above the



limits of the finite, we may be said to be redeemed by him, in the sense that we enter through him into the same God-consciousness.<sup>20</sup>

This doctrine takes different forms, so far as the details are concerned, in the theology of Hegel,<sup>21</sup> and in our own times in the theologies of Biedermann<sup>22</sup> and Pfeiderer.<sup>23</sup> They find a feeble echo in their English and American imitators. At the bottom these systems bear a close resemblance to each other. The Christian experience which they allow and endeavor to explain is altogether different from that which we claim as the true Christian experience. When we translate the terms which have an orthodox sound and give them their simple meaning, the result is to strip the Christian consciousness of all its distinctively Christian elements. The God who manifests himself in the experience of the Christian is an impersonal, unconscious God, moving blindly onward to hidden ends. The redemption which is effected is a deliverance from finiteness and ignorance rather than from sin. The new birth is not an ushering of the soul into the dependence and humility of the life in Christ, but an entrance into the pride and self-sufficiency of a philosophical system. The trinitarian characteristics of the Christian consciousness—which the advocates of this theology strenuously assert—are illusory. The pantheistic triad is not the personal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but three phases or aspects of the Absolute in the blind world-process.<sup>24</sup> The God-man is not the personal Jesus the Christ, at once human and divine, but mankind as the finite realization of the Infinite, of which realization Jesus is taken only as the symbol or exemplar. The God-man of the



Christian consciousness is, in truth, according to this view, the believer himself. Or rather, he is the reality, as yet imperfect, and Christ is the name under which the ideal is expressed ; so that we come close to the view of Kant, and the pantheist readily employs Kant's terminology in describing the Christian life.

But is this the true explanation of the Christian's experience ? Are the mental forms under which we apprehend it mere symbolical representations, and is the reality what pantheism claims ? Does the spiritual life of the Christian prove nothing more than the theory that has just been stated ? The believer answers, No ! He stands in the Christian experience and knows that it is not susceptible of such an explanation. He has the best of evidence that he does not mistake symbolical representations for facts. He knows that he is dealing not with notions but with realities.

There is a plausibility about the pantheistic theology which gives it credence with many who do not wholly grasp its meaning. It seems to furnish a fine and noble explanation of Christian experience and to do justice to all its elements. So ingenious are the devices it uses, and so skilful its employment of Christian phraseology, that it is not altogether easy for the uninitiated to meet and answer it. But the Christian who has subjected his experience to the tests of reason, and found in it those riches of divine grace and wisdom which have been described in these lectures, will not for a moment accept the pantheistic construction of it. He does not find himself the theatre of a blind process in which he is only a factor in the evolution of the Infinite. Rather he finds in his soul the arena on which the living God does bat-



tle with the powers of evil and rescues his priceless personality from destruction. When he comes to realize the poverty but scantily hidden by the high-sounding phrases and arrogant assumptions of the pantheistic mode of thought, he is filled with repugnance at the utter futility of such an explanation of the highest and holiest facts of his life. He is tempted to think that the advocates of this theory do not themselves know what the true Christian experience is, so different, so much lower, so altogether of another spirit, is the experience they describe.

How different a God who has no consciousness apart from man, to whom no prayer is possible, who works as blindly as the forces of nature, from the personal Father who forgives our sins and to whose mercy-seat we have constant access ; the living Christ, our ever-present Saviour ; and the Holy Spirit, whose presence and power are the source of our spiritual life ! How different the pantheistic redemption from the Christian deliverance from sin and Satan ! How heaven-wide the difference between the life of the Infinite in us, which is merely a natural life carrying with it no guarantee of personal existence when the finite limits of the Infinite are broken, and that eternal life which consists in the personal knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, that is the pledge of unending blessedness !

We gladly admit the moral earnestness of many who hold this view. We can understand how, in their reaction from the bare rationalism that has to so great an extent prevailed, they have found help and comfort in this doctrine as something higher and nobler than they have known ; how perhaps they have come to it in re-



action from the rationalistic tendency too often present in the popular representations of Christian orthodoxy. But without hesitation we declare that this is not the true explanation of the experience of the Christian, and that there is nothing here permanently to satisfy the cravings of the human soul that longs for redemption and peace with God. It is not a matter of surprise to us that this doctrine never proves a permanent refuge for thoughtful men, but that they draw back from it into orthodoxy or go on into agnosticism and materialism.

I cannot help thinking that we who are by profession, and I trust by divine calling, teachers of men in spiritual things, ought to take higher ground against the insidious inroads of this pantheistic tendency of thought. It is dangerous just in proportion to the nobility of the guise in which it comes. But it is not of God, and cannot do otherwise than hinder the advancement of the kingdom of God. I know we often hear it said by evangelical men that there is a pantheistic element in Christianity. What is meant is that the doctrine of the divine immanence is a part of true Christian theology and ought to be maintained in opposition to the deistic tendency which would suppress it in the interest of the divine transcendence. But the element in Christianity thus designated is not pantheistic in any true sense of the term and ought not to be so called. It is *toto cælo* different from the pantheism just described, which renders the divine immanence and the divine transcendence alike unmeaning.<sup>25</sup>

II. We come now to a very different class of objections, proceeding not from the opponents but from the



friends of orthodox Christianity. I am inclined to think, indeed, that at the root they spring from some of the same tendencies we have been dealing with in answering the unorthodox objections. But they are made in the interests of evangelical Christianity by men who are thoroughly at one with us in heart and life, and we should treat them with all respect. There is undoubtedly danger that in our desire to state the evidence of the Christian experience at its full worth we shall go too far, and lay a one-sided emphasis upon the subjective factors in Christianity. We are ourselves under the influence of the spirit of our age. About us are movements which in part control us, and of which we are only partially conscious. It may be that in our reaction from the deistic and pantheistic positions we lay ourselves open to objections similar to those we have urged against the philosophies and theologies we have been criticising. It will therefore be a wholesome and helpful exercise to examine the objections brought against us by our friends. There is always something good in the criticism of a friend. We can enter into it with a heartiness we cannot feel when we are dealing with those whom we have reason to believe radically wrong.

1. It is objected that the use here made of the Christian experience carries us beyond the bounds of sober Christian faith and lands us in enthusiasm, if not in fanaticism.

(1.) It is said that by following the line of argument which has guided us in these lectures we fall into mysticism.

Now there is a false mysticism and a true, a *Mysticismus* and a *Mystik*. The former we repudiate. To



the latter we heartily confess our allegiance. The false mysticism attempts a union with God that is rather physical than ethical and spiritual. It has its raptures, its revelations, its absorption into the Godhead, its extravagances in belief and practice, sometimes even its fanaticism, such as was witnessed among the Anabaptists at the time of the Reformation. One of the most suggestive modern writers upon the subject says: "The mystic, as such, was not to *know* anything about the Infinite, he was to 'gaze with closed eyes,' passively to receive impressions, lost in the silent, boundless 'Dark' of the Divine Subsistence. . . Philosophers and monks alike employ the word mysticism and its cognate terms as involving the idea, not merely of initiation into something hidden, but, beyond this, of an internal manifestation of the Divine to the intuition or in the feeling of the secluded soul. . . Mysticism presents itself in all its phases as more or less the religion of internal as opposed to external revelation—of heated feeling, sickly sentiment, or lawless imagination, as opposed to that reasonable belief in which the intellect and the heart, the inward witness and the outward, are alike engaged."<sup>26</sup> Charles Kingsley, in the *Saint's Tragedy*, has thus described the consciousness of the mystic:

"What bliss,

When, dying in the darkness of God's light,  
The soul can pierce these blinding webs of nature,  
And float up to the nothing, which is all things,  
The ground of being, where self-forgetful silence  
Is emptiness—emptiness, fulness—fulness, God,  
Till we touch Him, and like a snow-flake, melt  
Upon his light-sphere's keen circumference!"<sup>27</sup>



Dr. Hodge the Elder says that mysticism "is the theory, variously modified, that the knowledge, purity, and blessedness to be derived from communion with God, are not to be attained from the Scriptures and the use of the ordinary means of grace, but by a supernatural and immediate divine influence, which influence (or communication of God to the soul) is to be secured by passivity, a simple yielding the soul without thought or effort to the divine influx." <sup>28</sup>

I have been thus careful in the statement of what the false mysticism is, that I may clearly distinguish it from the true, to which, as has been said, we gladly confess our adherence. The true mysticism has been the salvation of the Christian church in all ages of its history, when formalism in worship and rationalism in religion have turned Christians away from vital Christianity. This mysticism has been nothing more than the view here presented, namely, that the believer has a personal spiritual experience of God and the Christian Realities. Sometimes, it is true, the mystics—using the term in the sense here designated—have gone too far into the opposite extreme in their reaction from barren formalism. But there has been something noble even in their extravagances. The great majority, however, of the class of whom I have been speaking, have been sober-minded men who have laid claim to nothing higher than the New-Testament ascribes to every Christian. Among the mystics of this stamp have been Augustin, Anselm, Bernard, Wyklif, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Bunyan, Whitefield, and the Wesleys. Pre-eminently to this class belonged our own great theologian, Jonathan Edwards. In every age, when the life of the church grows weak



and its inner fires die down, such mysticism is needed. Christians must be made to realize that their hidden life of faith and communion with God is their true life. They must be turned away from barren forms and doctrines to the living Father, the ever-present Christ, the Holy Spirit energizing in their souls.

But this true Christian mysticism has nothing in common with the false. It aims at nothing more than the possession and use of that communion with God which is essential to all genuine Christian life. It lays no claim to any other union with God than that which is spiritual and personal. It is far from asserting any immediate intuition of God.<sup>29</sup> It does not satisfy itself with contemplation and communion, but is turned outward also to the practical life of the Christian in the kingdom of God. Its faith is one which must manifest itself in love to our fellow-men as well as in love to God. It makes no pretence of receiving divine revelations. It does not base itself upon vague feelings, but upon the power of Christ manifest in the whole man, will, intellect, and feeling, and tested in its truth by reflective thought operating in the light of the rational intuitions. It is a sober and rational faith, knowing whereof it affirms, and ready to give a reason for itself to all men in all meekness and humility.

If the Christian experience, as it has been described, is a reality, there is no reason why it should not be made an evidence, and the highest evidence, of the truth of Christianity. To treat it thus is only to follow the dictate of a reason which has subjected itself to the will of Christ. It is not only foolish but wrong to turn from the highest evidence, that which alone can fully satisfy our desire for truth, and for the veri-



fication of that truth, and to content ourselves with proofs which from the nature of the case can never give us more than a higher or lower degree of probability. All that we ask for the basis of this proof is what every believer is willing enough to concede when he gives account of his own Christian life. "As all evangelical Christians admit a supernatural influence of the Spirit of God upon the soul, and recognize a higher form of knowledge, holiness, and fellowship with God as the effects of that influence, they are stigmatized as mystics by those who discard everything supernatural from Christianity." Thus writes Dr. Charles Hodge, meaning by the mysticism of which he declares that Christians are falsely accused, that which we have called the false mysticism. Again he says: "God, therefore, does hold immediate intercourse with the souls of men. He reveals himself unto his people, as he does not unto the world. He gives them the spirit of revelation in the knowledge of himself (Eph. i. 17). He unfolds to them his glory, and fills them with a joy which passes understanding." <sup>30</sup>

This is just what we ask to have conceded as the foundation of our evidence—this, and nothing more. And all that we ask for the proof itself is that the facts granted by all Christians should be taken at their full value. No Christian but believes in faith, prayer, and communion with the Father through the Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. None but believes in the change of heart, the progress in holiness, the capacitation for service in the kingdom of God, the commencement here of the life everlasting. But if we believe in them, let us take them at their full apologetical worth. Let us not talk of mysticism when



Christians treat these facts and truths as if they were realities. Would God there were more such mysticism in the Christian church !

There is a latent rationalism lurking in the minds of Christians which makes them timid about confessing the reality of their faith as a living faith that lays hold upon the divine realities, and leads them in preference to talk and act as if it were a mere intellectual faith. Thus they come into the greatest embarrassment when the truth of Christianity is called in question, and allow the unbeliever an easy victory over them. A little more Christian *rationality* is needed in place of this unchristian *rationalism*. This it is that has laid the church under the reproach of making sceptics by its apologetical methods. Let us once make unbelievers understand that our Christian experience carries its evidence in it, and we shall find them dealing far more respectfully with our beliefs than at present. A real conviction—that is, one that rests on reality—has a mighty power. Men cannot trifle with it. A conviction like that of the Christian, based upon evidence which satisfies the reason as well as the heart, is able to win the world to its side. It is time we should stop giving the opponent of Christianity who calls upon us for a proof of our belief every reason but the right one. Let us purge out the leaven of the old rationalism.

(2.) The same objection recurs in a different form when it is said that our evidence is a revival of the Quaker doctrine of the “inward light.” If this were the case, I should not shrink from admitting it. We have much to learn from the Quakers. I can think of no more salutary task for a student of divinity in this



sense-bound age, when the intellect and the heart are alike starved with the dry scholastic systems with which we theologians furnish them, than to turn to Barclay's Apology and with devout study to master the teachings of the first six "Propositions."

But our doctrine is not that of the Quakers. We avoid their one-sidedness and errors. We do indeed hold to a doctrine of the inner light. We could not be Christians at all without acknowledging that the believer's experience involves a divine illumination. The Holy Spirit in the soul touches the intellect with a new radiance and makes known a wholly new range of truth. So far as this is the case, we have a right to use this new truth as the basis of Christian evidence. God meant that we should do so, and it would be folly to ignore it. But this does not imply the acceptance of the Quaker doctrine. According to this doctrine, there is a direct communication of the truth to the soul, a supernatural revelation, which enables him who possesses it to dispense with all outward helps. Quaker theology recognizes no difference between the action of the Holy Spirit in and upon the souls of the apostles and holy men of old and his action in and upon the souls of Christians to-day. Barclay says that "where the true inward knowledge of God is, through the revelation of his Spirit, there is all; neither is there an absolute necessity of any other."<sup>1</sup>

The Scripture, according to this scheme, holds a subordinate place. Barclay says once more, speaking of the Scriptures, "Because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary



rule of faith and manners. Yet, because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty.”<sup>32</sup> To this we cannot assent.<sup>33</sup> We not only lay no claim to an illumination like the supernatural inspiration of the apostles and to the receiving of revelations such as were vouchsafed to them, but we also place the Scriptures above the illumination of the Spirit as a source of Christian truth. Though the light is perfect in itself, our apprehension of it is imperfect, and we need for our guidance the infallible objective revelation. Our inner light is only the common light of the Spirit’s presence which shines in the soul of the Christian. In this light it is possible for the Christian to be assured of the reality of Christianity and to learn much of God and his will. But although it is a first-hand source of knowledge, it is not an independent source of knowledge.<sup>34</sup>

I can find no better statement of our position than that of the elder Dr. Hodge: “There is no form of conviction more intimate and irresistible than that which arises from the inward teaching of the Spirit. All saving faith rests on his testimony or demonstrations (1 Cor. ii. 4). . . . This inward teaching produces a conviction which no sophistries can obscure, and no arguments can shake. It is founded on consciousness, and you might as well argue a man out of belief in his existence, as out of confidence that what he is thus taught of God is true. Two things, however, are to be borne in mind. First, that this inward teaching or demonstration of the Spirit is confined to truths



objectively revealed in the Scriptures. . . . And second, This experience is depicted in the Word of God. The Bible gives us not only the facts concerning God and Christ, ourselves and our relations to our Maker and Redeemer, but also records the legitimate effects of those truths on the minds of believers."<sup>35</sup>

(3.) A third form of the objection represents us as giving an undue prominence to the Christian consciousness. Schleiermacher, it is said, introduced the doctrine of the Christian consciousness into theology, and made it the source of a system of doctrine which was wholly divorced from the Scripture on the one side, and reason on the other, and which was wholly unorthodox in its main features—a system which rejected miracles, questioned the personality of God, made Christ nothing more than a man, denied the freedom of the will—in a word, was from beginning to end pantheistic. Now, it is said, the evidence of Christian experience is only a revival of this heterodox system in a new form.

In answering this form of the objection I wish to say a word in the first place about Schleiermacher. It is needless in this place, where the name of Henry B. Smith is revered, to defend the work which Schleiermacher accomplished as a theologian. Our honored teacher did that more than forty years ago in generous language that still glows with all its original fire.<sup>36</sup> The German philosopher and theologian was an epoch-making man, and is to be judged by the age in which he lived and the circumstances in which his work was done. His theology was undoubtedly defective. His philosophical training had been pantheistic, and his rationalistic associations led him to undervalue the



supernatural element in Christianity. But two things Schleiermacher did, for which Christianity will always bear him gratitude. In the first place, he turned the tide of German rationalism back to Christianity by vindicating the independent worth of Christian experience, showing the unbelieving thinkers of his age that in the personal relations of the Christian to God through Christ there is a sphere of reality which has a right to the same scientific treatment as the other spheres of human existence and activity. In the second place, he put into the centre of the theological system the person and redemptive work of the Saviour.<sup>37</sup>

These are the great and never-to-be-forgotten services which give his name a unique place among those of modern theologians. Out of his defective and pantheistic theology there grew an orthodox theology which was able to wage victorious battle with rationalism on the one side, and pantheism on the other, and which to-day embraces all that is vital and evangelical in German Christian thought. Moreover, while his influence upon the theological thinking of Great Britain and America has not been so direct, yet the later evangelical theology of these countries owes some of its best features to the teachings of Schleiermacher and his German successors.<sup>38</sup>

Now Schleiermacher did not invent the Christian consciousness, however good may be the reason for associating the term with his name. He merely called renewed attention to its existence and importance. It is true that his pantheistic mode of thought led to an abuse of the term, of which other pantheists availed themselves. According to the pantheistic view, as we



have seen, God comes to consciousness in man, and so the divine and the human consciousness are identical. Thus divine revelation and human thought when engaged with divine things are synonymous. It is also true that Schleiermacher regarded the Christian consciousness as an independent source of theology, and made it the task of systematic theology to reduce the contents of this consciousness to order and unity, without reference to the Scriptures or to philosophy, with the result of producing a subjective theology, based upon pious feeling, and in many respects arbitrary and defective.

But while these things are so, the fact remains that Schleiermacher's great work consisted in giving back to the Christian consciousness the place it had lost in theology, the place which always belonged to it. The Christian consciousness—that is, Christian experience, for the two are at the bottom not different—was restored to its rights.

But while we, in common with all theologians of modern times, are profoundly indebted to Schleiermacher, we are not responsible for his errors, nor for the prejudices which have clustered so thickly about his name. In presenting the evidence which is the subject of these lectures we simply claim that the experience of the believer is a reality, and that in its reality the Christian must find the highest proof of the truth of Christianity. We repudiate all pantheistic implications, and when we speak of the Christian consciousness, we mean what every sober evangelical Christian means when he gives his testimony to the reality of the divine life that is at work within him. Our evidence is simply Paul's "demonstration of the



Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 4), with the exception that the miraculous element so prominent in the days of the apostles is absent. We give no undue prominence to the Christian experience. Undoubtedly a very high place belongs to it in scientific apologetics, a place which hitherto has not generally been conceded to it. But, as I hope to show a little later, we do not in any sense undervalue the other evidences, but only try to set them in their true relation to this inner and central evidence, which we believe to be the true key-stone of the apologetical arch.

Attention should also be called to the fact that the prejudice aroused by recent discussions respecting the Christian consciousness does not really touch the subject upon which we are engaged. Some eminent modern disciples of Schleiermacher—disciples in following his evangelical spirit and methods, not in copying his theological and philosophical errors—have given an important place to the Christian consciousness, alongside of the Scriptures, as a source of theology, and have fallen under the reproach, unjustly, it seems to me, of having placed it in a position of superiority to the Scriptures. The most noted example is the great German theologian Dorner, who, however, does not by any means stand alone among his countrymen in this respect, nor go so far as many.

Now undoubtedly Christian experience is one of the legitimate sources of theology. The fact that two such men as Charles Hodge<sup>39</sup> and Henry B. Smith<sup>40</sup> give it a place among the sources is a sufficient voucher for its right of existence. There is a first-hand knowledge of Christian truth with which theology cannot dispense, though it needs to be corrected by the



infallible teachings of revelation, since it is the first-hand knowledge of a sinful and imperfect man. The fact that Dorner uses the term Christian consciousness, instead of Christian experience, is indifferent to all except a few rather ignorant and very over-timid theologians.

But our presentation of the evidence of Christian experience aims at an entirely different end from the theological method which looks to the Christian consciousness for a larger or smaller portion of the material of theology. We have been concerned solely with the question, What evidence has Christian experience to furnish us touching the truth of Christianity? It has been only incidentally that we have tried to state the contents of the Christian experience, and we have had no thought of weaving the material thus gathered into a system of theology without the help of the Scriptures and philosophy. Indeed, I do not believe it would be possible to construct a theology in this way. Thus, for example, while the fact of the Trinity has met us in its practical form at every step in our investigation of the Christian experience, I do not believe that from the fact alone, as thus revealed, we could possibly formulate a satisfactory and self-consistent statement of this great truth. Our work is a totally different one, namely, not to formulate and systemize religious truth but to prove religious fact. It ought not, therefore, to be assailed by the same objections, as if it were the same thing.

(4.) The final form of the objection has been abundantly answered. It is that we undervalue the Scriptures.

On the contrary, we know of no Christian experi-



ence of which the Scriptures have not been—through the influence of the Holy Spirit—the source and rule. In this sense we place the Scriptures distinctly above our experience. It is only through them that we are able to attain it, and understand it. But we do claim that when the experience is thus attained, and when we have found it to conform with the teachings of the Word, it has a value as a first-hand source of knowledge than which there is no higher.<sup>41</sup>

2. It is objected that our evidence of Christian experience makes everything turn upon the subjective states of the believer, and so opens the way for that morbid self-consciousness and inward self-scrutinizing which are opposed to all wholesome Christian life. We are to look, it is said, not to ourselves but to God and Christ. Our religion is to be objective, not merely subjective. The whole proof, as it has been presented here, is rooted in the Christian's regeneration and sanctification.<sup>42</sup>

I am not blind to the force of this objection. I have felt it strongly myself in all my thought and study upon the subject before us. But my mature judgment is that it is not well-founded. With the human mind constituted as it is, there is no possible way for us to assure ourselves of the reality of the objective except through the examination of the subjective. All knowledge is necessarily relative to our faculties and mental states. We have no immediate intuition of the thing in itself. The most we claim is that we know that it is and what it is. My certainty of the existence of any material objects, such as my desk or paper, is mediated by the effects of those objects in consciousness. If I will convince myself that they are not illusions, I



must look to the modifications of my consciousness. I cannot go out of myself and cognize the objects in their bare reality.

The same is true of our Christian knowledge. We cannot attain to any naked intuition of the Divine—the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father. To try to reach such an intuition, and to believe it reached, have been in all ages the marks of mysticism and fanaticism. To such an intuition we lay no claim.<sup>43</sup> If we call our knowledge immediate, it is not in the sense of being unmediated.<sup>44</sup> It is through the effects of the sacred Three upon our consciousness that we know their presence. It is the new heart, the new life, that is the evidence that God is the Author of our redemption.

But the examination of our inward life for the proofs of a divine working—or for the evidences of our Christian state—is not unwholesome, provided the process be properly conducted. The danger begins when we are tempted to dwell upon these states without passing beyond them to their divine Causes.

We are not distinctly conscious of the steps involved in our ordinary knowledge. I see a book directly, and all my thought and action go upon the assumption that my knowledge is direct. This is as it should be. It would not be wise under ordinary circumstances to stop and examine the eye, the nerve, the brain, the sensation, the perception, and the reasoning involved in the perception. Nevertheless, all these steps, and more, must be passed through. And there are times when for scientific reasons, or even for practical reasons, it is well to test the knowledge at every point, and especially to scrutinize its subjective elements.

In like manner the normal Christian knowledge



passes directly to its divine objects—the Holy Spirit, the Christ, the Father. The believer does not bring distinctly before his consciousness the steps involved. He feels the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ dwells in his heart by faith, he has immediate access to the Father. All this is right and wholesome. Yet it is equally right, when the interests of Christian science require—or when the practical question of the Christian's being in a state of grace is to be tested—to examine the elements of this knowledge, and especially to investigate its foundation in consciousness.

There are two ways in which we can treat our Christian consciousness. One is as a mirror to reflect ourselves for the fostering of our pride and self-complacency. The other is as a glass through which we may gain a certain sight and knowledge of the divine Authors of our salvation. The first way we utterly repudiate; the second we claim to be legitimate and necessary.

3. But it is objected that our evidence implies the universal existence among Christians of such an experience as that which has been described, whereas, as a matter of fact, it is not the possession of all. Christian assurance, it is said, does not belong to the essence of the Christian state; yet without Christian assurance our proof is of no avail.

In reply, I admit that there are degrees of experience, and that all do not have the same fulness of knowledge of the Christian realities which gives our evidence its convincing power. I also admit that many Christians temporarily lose their faith and doubt the reality of their experience. But I claim that these exceptions do not invalidate the rule. The normal Christian experi-



ence is one which involves the elements described and which carries the evidence with it. Christian assurance, in the sense of an undoubting certainty of salvation, is a privilege all may enjoy if they will, but I doubt whether it is necessary in order to the evidence we are describing. Even a small degree of experience may be accompanied by proof, and a man may have the proof who does not have the certainty of personal salvation based upon the proof.<sup>45</sup>

4. A more serious objection is that our evidence is in some important respects different from the "internal testimony of the Spirit," which Protestants have always taught, and which—so the objectors claim—is the only admissible experimental proof.<sup>46</sup>

In reply, I cheerfully admit that the evidence before us is not the same as the traditional *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. But I regard it as one of its chief recommendations that it supplements the deficiencies of that very important and valuable doctrine. It differs from it only in being broader and deeper, in being the whole of which that is the part. That doctrine was first advanced as an answer to the objections of the Roman Catholics, who declared that the rejection of the authority of the church by the Protestants left them without evidence of the divinity and truth of the Scriptures. In reply to these objections the Protestant appealed to his inward certainty of the truth of the Scripture doctrine, a certainty which he claimed was wrought by the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. But this was rather the assertion of the existence of evidence than an exhibition of the grounds of evidence. There was a further question to be asked, namely, How do we know that this inward persuasion is actually



wrought by the Holy Spirit? and this is simply another form of the question, How do we know that Christianity is a system of divine powers and realities operating in the souls of men to-day? <sup>47</sup>

Our evidence of Christian experience gives the answer to this question, following the lead not of the early Protestants, but of the Puritan theologians, such as Baxter and his successors. We show that the new life of the believer, involving as it does a transformation of the whole man—intellect, sensibility, and will—is the proof of the presence of the Spirit, and through the Spirit, of the Christ and the Father. Out of this evidence of the reality of the divine Agencies at work in the Christian grows his evidence of the divinity and truth of the Scripture, or of the system of doctrine contained in the Scripture. It is because the believer has experienced the facts, that he is persuaded of the truth of the sacred Book that describes the facts. His intellect, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, has apprehended the Christian realities, and thus has confirmed the teachings of the Gospel.

I assert, therefore, that while our evidence is not the same as the internal witness of the Spirit, it furnishes the true foundation for that doctrine, and finds a place for it in subordination to itself. <sup>48</sup>

I know that there are those who are still so far influenced by the rationalistic tendency from the first inherent in Protestantism that they find fault with us for making facts rather than doctrine the immediate object of our proof. They deny that Christian experience involves a knowledge through contact of the divine Realities, and claim that it only gives us a persuasion of Christian truth. My answer to them is to be



found in the whole course of our argument. I truly believe that we have actual proof of such knowledge by contact. Moreover, to my mind their position is a much more difficult one than that taken here. It is hard to see how the human mind, constituted as it is, can come to an assured certainty of the truth of doctrine apart from a personal experimental knowledge of the facts upon which the doctrine rests. That the Holy Spirit should produce such a certainty by a mere act of power, seems to me not in accordance with his ordinary working, which, while distinctly supernatural, always conforms to the laws of the human mind.<sup>49</sup>

5. Again it is urged, still by the friends of orthodox Christianity, that the evidence of Christian experience is not in the true and accepted sense of the term an *evidence* of Christianity. The evidences, it is said, are the external proofs, either historical or rational, that is, derived either from human testimony or from the testimony of reason. By such proofs we vindicate the historical character of Christ's person and mission, and of the revelation he gave to the world, and show that the revelation itself is intrinsically reasonable and in accordance with the divine character as known through nature. The object of the evidences is to confirm our Christian experience, which is not a proof in itself but rather the thing to be proved; and it is proved when the objective revelation to which it owes its origin is shown to be historically and rationally credible.<sup>50</sup>

This objection, so far as it relates to those who are not Christians, was answered in the last lecture.<sup>51</sup> But if it can be shown—as I think we succeeded in doing—that the testimony of the Christian to the reality of his experience may be regarded as in some respects the



strongest of the external evidences, certainly the experience itself ought to be regarded as an evidence, and that of the highest validity, for the believer himself.

It must, however, be confessed, that this objection has the prevalent apologetics upon its side. The evidences of Christianity commonly presented are the external. Even the so-called internal evidence is not derived from Christian experience, but either from the intrinsic worth of the Christian system, or from its correspondence with the character of God as known through the natural revelation.

Nevertheless, in spite of the tendency to confine the evidence to these external proofs, I cannot think that the objection is well taken. It is derived from that imperfect conception of Christianity which ignores the system of divine redemptive agencies, resting on the great Christian realities, by which Christianity is made a present power in the world. This aspect of Christianity is above all important; for while the other elements are the condition of this element, they derive their whole significance from it. What difference does it make to me whether Christianity is a self-consistent system of doctrine, or whether Jesus Christ lived, and performed miracles, and taught the people, and died, and rose again eighteen centuries and a half ago, unless Jesus Christ is present here and now in the world and in my heart, bringing the sinner to the Father through the Spirit? If my proof ceases just where the real significance of Christianity begins, it is a sadly defective proof and stands in crying need of being supplemented.

Moreover, the objection implies that Christian experience carries with it no scientific proof. It is an expe-



rience which, for aught we know, might be delusive, if it were not sustained by the outward evidences. Accordingly, the simple, unlearned Christian, who has no knowledge of books and no special training of intellect to understand them, must go to scholars for the evidence that his faith is not founded upon the sands of a subjective imagination. In like manner the Christian of larger intellectual culture must meet the unbeliever on the field outside of his fortifications, and not use the citadel at all in his defence. But such a view is intrinsically absurd. Without meaning to do so, the objector to all intents and purposes concedes to the sceptic just what he is so vigorously trying to prove—the indefensibility of the Christian faith. He implies that it rests upon no present reality, that it involves no real contact with God and Christ through the Holy Spirit, and that the new birth and the new life have no recognizable supernatural basis.

According to this view, the Christian certainty is merely a logical inference from historical facts and rational conclusions. Because I am convinced upon sufficient probable evidence that Jesus Christ gave to men a divine revelation and wrought out a divine redemptive work nearly nineteen hundred years ago; and because the system of doctrinal truth connected with this revelation is consonant with the divine character and intrinsically reasonable; and furthermore, because I have conformed to the conditions upon which grace and redemption are offered to sinners—*therefore*, I have a right to call myself a Christian, and this inference from the evidences is true and rational. Nevertheless, when I pray to God through Christ for the grace of the Holy Spirit, I have no direct and immediate evidence of my



contact with the Father or with Christ, and no evidence that my prayer is answered by the gift of the Spirit's help. I do not say that the objectors reason in this way, but I do say that only such argument is consistent with the position which they take upon the subject.

Let me press the facts home by a hypothetical case. Suppose a heathen should surprise you one day at prayer. He asks you to whom you are praying. You answer, to God through Christ the Mediator. He asks you again, what reason you have to believe that there is any Christ, and that he hears your prayers. You reply that nearly nineteen centuries ago such a being lived in Palestine and showed himself by miracles to be divine, and taught a doctrine consonant with the highest human reason. "But," rejoins the heathen, "have you no evidence that he hears you now?" "Why, yes," you reply, "that evidence of nearly nineteen centuries ago. If that is valid, I am sure that he hears me." "And otherwise not?" asks your heathen wistfully, and leaves you, disappointed.

Now, if we are going to be consistent, either the one position or the other must be accepted. Either we must admit that the Christian has no experience of the Christian realities which deserves the name, but is dependent upon the historical evidence of a revelation made nearly two millenniums ago, and the rational evidence of the intrinsic reasonableness of that revelation as it comes to us to-day in the form of a doctrinal system made known to us through the Bible and the testimony of the church. Or we must admit that Christian experience is self-evidencing, like all other first-hand knowledge, and that in it the Christian comes into actual contact with the redemptive reali-



ties, and has through personal acquaintance that knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ his Son which is eternal life. The issue is a plain one. We may accept which alternative we prefer, but one or the other we must accept.

Now I claim that the Christian, when the issue is fairly made up, has but one choice; he must admit the reality and self-evidencing power of Christian experience; he cannot face the facts of his own consciousness unless he does so. But if he accepts this horn of the dilemma, he must admit that the highest evidence is that which is derived from Christian experience, and that it is evidence in the truest sense. For what is evidence? A distinguished modern philosophical authority defines it as "the ground or reason of knowledge, the light by which the mind apprehends things, whether immediately or mediately."<sup>62</sup> Certainly the experience of the Christian finds the ground or reason of its knowledge in itself; the Christian consciousness furnishes the light by which the mind apprehends Christianity. There is no such evidence as that of actual contact with reality, and that there is such a contact in the Christian consciousness, as truly as in the consciousness of the world, has already been shown. The sensations which come to us from material objects are not the only contents of consciousness. These spiritual realities vindicate their right of existence upon grounds as rational as those upon which the truth of our knowledge of the outward world rests. If I were asked to prove the existence of Manhattan Island, I should not despise the evidence I might gain from reliable histories, or from the intrinsic reasonableness of the belief that such an island must exist at



such a place. But first and foremost would come the evidence of my present experience of it, the fact that in years past and now my eyes have seen it and my feet have trodden its surface. It would be absurd to deny the name of evidence to what is the highest and most convincing proof of all. Nor would the value of the evidence be impaired by the fact that some incredulous New Zealander might doubt whether such an island exists and call my testimony in question. There is no more reason why such an absurdity should find a place in our apologetics than in our practical life. Let me repeat what I said before: we Christians will do well to have the courage of our convictions.

In conclusion, let me say that while the survey of the objections we have made is doubtless in some points incomplete, I think it has been sufficient to show that we have a ready and rational answer to give to the arguments urged against our position. Like Peter, the Christian of to-day declares that he does not follow cunningly devised fables, when he makes known the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but is an eye-witness of his majesty (2 Pet. i. 16). We are not afraid to meet the objections brought against us by the opponents of evangelical Christianity or by our own friends, whom we verily believe to be at one with us in their inmost convictions, though at first our method seems to them novel and of doubtful value.



## LECTURE IX.

### RELATION TO OTHER EVIDENCES.

It remains for us to examine the position occupied by the evidence of Christian experience in the system of the Christian evidences. All proof of real existence is organic. The several arguments by which the reality of a thing is proved are not so many isolated lines of verification, but integral parts of a whole, elements of a single proof, all together necessary for the full vindication to the reason of the fact or truth in question. There is, in fact, but one evidence, which thought decomposes into its elements, as the prism does the white ray of light. This evidence is an organism in the true sense of the term. The parts stand in relations of mutual dependence, they all contribute to a common end, and they have their different functions, the value of which is to be estimated in the light of their respective contributions to that end.<sup>1</sup>

I wish here, in a way that thus far has not been possible, to emphasize the importance of the whole system of Christian evidences. I once asked a German musician of some local prominence which he regarded as the most important instrument of music. His answer, given after a moment's hesitation, was—the orchestra. No one instrument is worthy to be placed in the highest category, but all together. This is the true idea of the organism of Christian proofs. We want, not



separate instruments, but the whole orchestra. Baxter truly says: "God's evidences must not be separated, much less must one be pleaded to the neglect of the rest."<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, while this is the case, I think there can be no question that there is an order of relative importance in the evidences, and also of relative independence. The musician of whom I spoke a moment ago might without inconsistency have designated some instruments in the orchestra as of more importance than the rest. There are many members in the one body, but all the members have not the same office. Some of the parts of an organism are more essential to the attainment of the common end than are others. A scale of importance is thus established. Though all the members of the body are necessary, yet the head is, relatively to the life and well-being of the whole, of more importance than the feet. Moreover, the head has relatively more independence than the feet. We can think of the body as existing, though in a mutilated and maimed condition, without the feet. But we cannot think of it as existing at all without the head. The latter is essential in a sense in which the former are not.

Thus judged, it seems to me that the place of supreme importance among the evidences of Christianity must be conceded to the evidence of Christian experience. It is the vital member of the organism of proofs, in which the life of the whole is concentrated as in no other. It is, to change the figure, the keystone of the arch of evidences. We can conceive of the other arguments as to be dispensed with under certain circumstances; but this is absolutely indispensable.<sup>3</sup>



That I am not going too far in ascribing this high importance to the proof from experience may be readily shown. All men stand in one of two relations to the Christian realities and the spiritual life to which they give rise—either within their sphere or outside of it. If they are inside, then the most important evidence must be the direct, personal, experimental knowledge. They may employ the other evidences to confirm the evidence of Christian experience, but the latter is the solid foundation upon which their certainty rests. If, on the other hand, men are outside of the sphere of the Christian realities, they cannot, while they remain in this condition, have complete proof of the truth of Christianity. Their only way to obtain it is to become Christians. To such persons the objective evidences, though they may bring probability, greater or less, of the truth of Christianity, can never bring certainty. Human testimony has its high value and ought to be respected. But human testimony is fallible and cannot of itself bring a personal conviction concerning a subject of such vast importance. In like manner the reasonableness of Christianity is a strong recommendation of it. But, apart from the question whether the man who stands outside of the Christian sphere can appreciate its reasonableness, mere reasonableness is not a sufficient ground of certitude. It has to do with notions, not with things. It affords presumption, not proof. Systems which the best thought of men long ago rejected have seemed highly reasonable in their day to the most thoughtful minds. The only complete proof of a fact in the world of sense is to see it with our own eyes and touch it with our own hands. The only complete evidence of a fact in the



spiritual world is to experience it through the action of our spiritual susceptibilities and powers.<sup>4</sup>

The other evidences have an important preliminary use in opening the way for the evidence of Christian experience. They do not, however, carry with them their full force until the higher evidence has been attained, and they are seen in the light which it throws upon them. It is thus alone that their probability is turned into certainty. To the Christian who has tasted and seen that the Lord is good the historical and rational proofs, and those forms of the practical which lie outside of personal experience, carry with them a power of which the outsider has but little conception.

It is especially with reference to this fact that I wish to show the relation of the experimental proof to the other evidences. In doing so I shall follow the classification outlined in the first lecture.<sup>5</sup> We distinguish the historical, the rational, and the practical evidences of Christianity. These we shall examine *seriatim*.

I. Let us begin by considering the relation in which the evidence of Christian experience stands to that branch of the historical evidence which is concerned with the questions respecting the authenticity, genuineness, credibility, and inspiration of the Bible.

It has already been shown to what an extent the evidence of Christian experience is dependent upon the evidence for the truth of the Scriptures.<sup>6</sup> Christian experience is in a true sense the product of the Scriptures. Not that they are the efficient cause of it; that is God in Christ acting through the Holy Spirit. But they are the instrumental cause, inasmuch as they are the record of the redemptive revelation and the



guide of the Christian life. God comes to the soul, as we have seen, through the Gospel, and this Word of God, which is the quintessence of the divine revelation, can be traced mediately or immediately to the Bible. The initial experience of the Christian life and also its later experiences are shaped and colored by the influence of the Bible. There is, indeed, what may be called a living tradition of the Gospel, which has a relative independence; but the church continually goes back to the Bible for the correction of this tradition. There is no reason to believe that Christianity would for any long time continue to exist as an active power in the world, were the Bible to be blotted out of existence. As Protestantism has made the Bible the "formal principle" of its theology, so it has made it the same of its religious life.

Accordingly, a certain degree of conviction respecting the force of the biblical evidence for the truth of Christianity must be presupposed as an essential condition of Christian experience, and of the evidence derived from that experience. This does not necessarily imply that the individual believer has convinced himself, before his conversion, of the reliability of the evidence for the authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the Scriptures. But it does imply, at least in ordinary cases, a belief, based upon grounds more or less satisfactory, in the substantial trustworthiness of the Bible as the record of the redemptive revelation and the standard of Christian faith and practice. This belief in very many cases is founded upon the general opinion, in which the individual shares, and which has for its basis the conviction of the competent few who have examined the proofs and come to decided opin-



ions ; as well as upon the belief and testimony of Christians, whose influence extends to those who have not access, like themselves, to the Christian realities, which are the sources of the Bible itself.

I am anxious to emphasize this dependence of the evidence of experience upon the historical evidence relating to the Bible. It grows out of that organic relation of the different proofs and their mutual dependence, to which reference has already been made. In view of this fact, I would insist upon the importance of a thorough grounding of the young in the evidences for the authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the scriptural books. It is in many cases a most helpful preparative for the application of the experimental proof. Such a grounding is desirable in view of the assaults made by sceptics upon the Bible. So, too, these evidences have their preliminary value in the case of doubters or unbelievers. If men will not come immediately to Christ and test his salvation for themselves, or if on account of intellectual difficulties they feel themselves unable to do so, it is well to remove the obstacles out of the way, so far as this is possible. I doubt whether any man has ever reached full intellectual satisfaction respecting the truth of Christianity in this way, but I would not deny the value of the evidences in such a case.

But while the historical evidence for the truth of the Scriptures conditions the evidence of Christian experience in such a way that the latter is to a certain extent dependent upon the former, there is a much truer and higher sense in which the relation is reversed. At the best the effect produced by the historical evidence is imperfect, a mere *fides humana* and



not a *fides divina*. It is at most a faith to satisfy the intellect, not a faith that has power to bring the whole man into living union with Christ. When we have been led along the path of the preliminary evidence to the discovery of the high and convincing evidence of a personal Christian experience, then, and not till then, we can return to the former and estimate it at its true value.

Now I claim that only a Christian, who has gained the altitude of the experimental evidence, can appreciate the full value of the evidences for the authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the Scriptures. He has drunk at the fountain-head and knows how to estimate the worth of the streams which flow from it. He has tested the truth of the Bible method of redemption in his own inward life. He has come into contact with the great salvation itself, which entered the world in the sacred history recorded by the Bible. He has made personal acquaintance with the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of God and life eternal are known in his inmost experience. The substantial truth of the Bible is thus verified to him in a way the validity of which he cannot doubt. It is with this knowledge that he approaches the historical questions as to age, authorship, object, circumstances, relation to contemporaneous history, and the like.

It will be said that I am preparing to beg the whole question of historical evidence, since I urge that our alleged higher evidence must have the precedence. But this is farthest from the fact. We talk of investigation without presuppositions; but such investigations are impossible, and would be worthless, were they not



impossible. Mere events do not make history. All history is the working out of ideas under a higher guidance. We must have some knowledge of the ideal element, if we are going to give any rational interpretation of the facts. But such knowledge is a presupposition. Every man approaches the historical questions connected with the study of the Old and New Testaments with presuppositions. The great question is, Are they justifiable ones? It is not a question between presuppositions and no presuppositions, but between right ones and wrong ones. Now the historical questions connected with the authenticity and credibility of the biblical books, and especially those which arise from the investigations of the so-called "higher criticism," are of a somewhat obscure and intricate character. If we come to them with a prejudice against revelation or with no proper understanding of it, we cannot estimate the facts at their true value.<sup>8</sup> But when we have tested by our experience the revelation which the Bible records and found it true, then the whole case becomes different. Then we can see the true value of the historical facts.

The Protestant Reformers and the age following the Reformation clearly recognized the importance of this experimental evidence as the true proof of the truth of the Scriptures. They expressed their conviction in the assertion that the real evidence of the divine character of the Bible is the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. This inward witness, according to the old theologians, was not an objective voice of God in the soul attesting the truth of the Scripture, but that illumination of the Spirit by which the believer is enabled to perceive its divinity and truth. The spiritual eyes



are opened, and the Christian recognizes in the Bible the presence and power of God. In the last lecture<sup>9</sup> I tried to show that this testimony of the Spirit is itself a part of the evidence of Christian experience, and that the persuasion of the truth and divinity of the Scriptures which it produces is founded upon the personal knowledge of the Christian realities involved in the larger experience.

Now the testimony of the Spirit does not by any means prove the truth of everything in the Bible or make historical investigation and biblical criticism unnecessary. What it does do is to show that the great facts and truths which form the essence of the Bible prove on experiment to be the divine facts and truths the Bible claims. Inasmuch as the Bible is not a mere aggregate of disconnected books, but an organic unity dealing with one great theme, to which all the parts have a well-defined relation, this verification through the witness of the Spirit goes far toward verifying the Bible as a whole. Moreover, the Christian, in whose heart the Spirit of God is present, is able to recognize the handiwork and presence of the same Spirit in the Bible, at least to a very considerable extent, and this not only in the revelation which the Bible records, but also in the record itself. Nor is this all: the testimony of the Spirit thus becomes a test—not, indeed, the only one, but in some respects the most important one—of the inspiration, and therefore of the canonicity, of the individual books of the Bible. In a word, then, the believer has through his own experience the proof of the truth and divine authorship of the Bible. This is the ground upon which the unlettered Christian, who knows nothing of the ordinary



evidences, accepts the Bible with undoubting trust as the Word of God. For the practical purposes of the Christian life it is sufficient.<sup>10</sup>

I do not, however, claim that the testimony of the Spirit is the solution of all the problems which beset the student of the Scriptures. It does not alone and of itself answer the objections of the unbeliever. There are historical questions and questions of textual and literary criticism which may, and indeed must, have a very different answer. God did not mean that Christians should meet these difficult problems with the mere appeal to the inward testimony of the Spirit. Such a procedure would go far to justify the position of the German theologian Michaelis, who declared that he had never experienced the testimony of the Spirit ;<sup>11</sup> for it was doubtless a testimony respecting such questions as these that he had in mind. The witness within does not determine the age or authorship of a biblical book ; it does not enable us to settle merely historical questions.

But I do claim that only the man who comes to the examination of the Bible and its phenomena with that first-hand knowledge of the truth of its great facts and doctrines which comes from personal experience is competent to enter upon these critical and historical investigations and likely to find a satisfactory solution of them. What we complain of is that these investigations have been so largely carried on by men who have distinctly repudiated the Christian experience and have come to the subject with naturalistic presuppositions. And still more do we complain that Christian scholars often allow themselves blindly to follow such men, when their own stand-point, if they could only understand it, is altogether different.<sup>12</sup>



When, however, the evidence of Christian experience has been given its proper place, the way is opened for the fullest and freest investigation of the historical and critical questions relating to the Bible. It is not the Christian who has the witness in himself and knows what he believes, who is timid about subjecting the Bible to the tests of criticism. Such a Christian has no fear that the Bible will suffer by dealing thus with it, but is convinced that whatever new facts may be discovered concerning it, will only serve to bring out more fully the divine claim of the precious Book to truth and authority. He is quite willing to revise his views as to details, and he quietly awaits the results of those scholarly investigations which have for their object to determine the time, order, and structure of the larger portions of the Scripture, and their relation to each other. He will lose nothing if the Pentateuchal question is settled upon an entirely different basis from the traditional. He can afford to make the largest concessions to criticism, provided only it does not proceed upon presumptions destructive to revelation and antagonistic to spiritual religion. In a word, such a Christian, since he is in full possession of Christianity as a living reality, is sure that the Book which not only relates how the redemptive revelation first came into the world, but gives that revelation in its authentic form, the Book which has been instrumental in bringing him into personal relations to Christ, will successfully stand all the tests to which it can be subjected. The guide-book which has brought him into the heavenly country, and is leading him step by step to the city which hath foundations, cannot be wrong. He is desirous that it should be thoroughly investigated with all the appli-



ances of literary and historical science. He is glad to know every new fact that can throw light upon its origin and composition. He has tested the truth of the revelation in himself, and he is not afraid that the record of revelation will be harmed by the most searching investigation.

The Christians who are afraid of the full and free examination of biblical questions are generally those who are without the evidence of Christian experience, or those who having it at their disposal will not use it. Because they have not come to a clear understanding of the scientific value of the proof within, they are in constant dread lest the foundations of the external proof may be shaken. It seems to me, as I look at the current controversies, and glance forward into the future, seeking to discern the coming experiences of the Christian church, that we need more than anything else to understand the relation in which the evidence of Christian experience stands to the historical evidences of the authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the Scriptures.<sup>13</sup> How much force is now wasted that ought to be applied to the defence and upbuilding of our common Christianity, force that goes only to the perpetuation of controversy and bickering among Christians! I hope the future has better things in store for us. I long for the time to come when this continual conflict will be over, and the critical questions settled, at least to the satisfaction of candid and sober-minded Christians, and when men will once more receive the Bible with the old, simple faith, and *live* upon it.<sup>14</sup>

The Christian who feels the full power of the evidence of experience finds in the Bible one of the strong-



est proofs for the truth of Christianity. Led himself by the Spirit of God, he is sure, as he reads this Book, that the same Spirit was active in its composition. It is to him the rule and standard of Christian truth and practice. By it he corrects the one-sidedness of his own Christian experience. To it the church goes, that it may test and measure its beliefs by this primitive record of the Christian life. Read in the light of a personal experience, the Bible shows itself to be the most wonderful Book, or collection of books, the world has ever seen. It carries its evidence with it. I am sure that if we examine the connection between experience and the Bible, we shall find that the church has given to the latter the peerless place which it holds, only on the ground of the former.

II. We have now to consider the relation of the evidence of experience to the evidence of miracles. This is a matter of very great importance. The apologetics which prevailed during the earlier part of the present century laid the chief stress of its proof upon the arguments from miracles and prophecy, especially the former.<sup>16</sup> This, supplemented by a few applications of the historical and rational evidence, constituted the whole of the system of proof. The proposition which the apologetics of the period just referred to set itself to prove was that Christianity is supernatural. Christianity, as we have seen, was prevailingly regarded as a system of doctrine, religious and moral. It was not clearly distinguished from the Scriptures which give us the original record of it. The problem was to prove the form, rather than the contents, of Christianity.<sup>16</sup> Let it be shown that the original introduction of Christianity into the world was



accompanied by unmistakable divine attestations, and the proof was complete. Then the contents of revelation must be accepted without question as divine. Such attestations were found in the miracles, which being "violations of the laws of nature," were indisputable evidence of the interposition of God.

I have spoken of the deistical tendency which the old evidential science shared with the systems opposed to Christianity. This showed itself in nothing more clearly than in the matter before us. The deist declared that God, having created the world and endowed it with its laws, remained behind the scenes, taking no farther part in its affairs. The deistic or rationalistic Christian, while not going so far as this in the assertion of the divine withdrawal from activity in the world, was inclined to think of God as under ordinary circumstances thus quiescent. But he differed from his adversary in maintaining that on special occasions, for important purposes connected with his great purpose of revelation, God broke through the barriers he had set up, bestowing new truth upon men and attesting that truth by violations of natural law, that is, by miracles. The miracles, accordingly, once proved to have taken place, were incontrovertible proof of the truth of the revelation, which was then to be accepted on the authority of God.

Now the actual occurrence of the miracles was proved by testimony, and the old apologetics displayed the greatest skill and logical power in conducting this proof, making a very strong argument, possessed of a high degree of probability, that the testimony of the Gospel writers is to be accepted. Our recent theologians, in their reaction from the antiquated methods of



Christian evidence, are not inclined to give the advocates of proof by miracles the credit which fairly belongs to them. The world has never seen acuter and on the whole better reasoning of its sort than that by which men like Paley demonstrated the trustworthiness of the testimony on which the Bible miracles rest. Such testimony would be accepted in any court of justice in matters of ordinary importance, or would be regarded as sufficient to authenticate any ordinary history.<sup>17</sup>

But just here appears the point upon which everything turns. The matters and the history with which the evidences of Christianity have to do are not ordinary, and testimony to events so extraordinary cannot be received as alone sufficient, when we have to verify alleged miracles which happened so many centuries ago. The famous argument of Hume<sup>18</sup>—an argument that has not yet ceased to be influential—was based upon the assumption that it is more likely, as human experience goes, that the testimony to the occurrence of miracles was mistaken than that they actually took place. Experience gives innumerable precedents for the fallibility of human testimony, but none for the violation of the laws of nature; therefore in this matter of miracles it is wiser to trust nature than the testimony of fallible men.

It has been shown a thousand times that Hume reasoned sophistically, since he took it for granted that experience knows of no violation of the laws of nature, the very point in dispute. Still, while Hume's argument did not overthrow the evidence of miracles, it did disclose the weakness of the old method of stating and using the evidence. Mere testimony, no matter how



good it may be, is not a sufficient basis for the authentication of a divine revelation. It gives at most high probability, but can never give certainty. Therefore miracles taken alone in their bare marvelousness are an inadequate proof of the truth of such a system as Christianity. Even those who first witnessed the miracles were not always convinced, and after so long a lapse of time we are quite unable to rest the full weight of our faith upon this one support. If the only or chief reason why I believe that God hears my prayers and that Jesus Christ saves me is that the miracles actually occurred nearly nineteen hundred years ago, I can never feel secure in my faith, no matter how strong the argument from probability may be made.

Modern theologians have felt strongly the need of reconstructing the argument from miracles, and have been signally successful in the attempt to do so.<sup>19</sup> They have recognized the fact that the weak point in the argument as it used to be stated was its deistical character, which gave it some advantage in the fight with the deists themselves, but laid it open all the more to the attacks of sceptics like Hume. Christianity is not merely a doctrinal system. It is a historical revelation in redemptive power, comprising at once divine truth and grace. It goes forward, now that the historical revelation has been brought completely into the world, in the progressive redemption of men and their activity in the kingdom of God. It is the present power and agency of Christ, doing his Father's redemptive work by means of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, Christianity is not a code or a theological system, which can be handed down from heaven ready-made in



a documentary form and authenticated by miracles alone. Its form cannot be verified apart from its contents.

Miracles are not violations of the laws of nature. The old confusion of thought on this subject, which held possession of the theological mind so long and so persistently, has been cleared away. We are able now to distinguish between forces and laws. The force, material or spiritual, is the cause. The laws are ideal, mere statements of the way in which forces act when the conditions for their action are present. Laws never act; but forces, when they act, act according to their laws. There is not the slightest reason to believe that God ever violates a law of nature; rather his veracity is involved in the maintenance of these laws, one jot or one tittle of which will not fail till all be fulfilled. What God does in the miracle is to produce an effect which is altogether or partially independent of the forces or causes ordinarily acting in nature. A helpful, although incomplete, analogy is to be found in the causal activity of the human will. When I lift a book into the air, a spiritual cause, namely, my choice and the consequent volition, comes in to supersede the lower causes, and in part to give direction to them. These lower forces are not interfered with, nor are their laws violated, but in so far as they continue to act at all, they act according to their laws.

Moreover, the deistic view of God, which regards him as the more or less passive spectator of the operations of his world, has yielded to a more completely theistic view. We see that God acts as truly through second causes as when he performs a miracle. The difference is not one of more or less divine power em-



ployed, but of different methods of using the same divine power. In his ordinary providence God employs the forces commonly at work in nature, namely, what we call second causes or natural forces. In the miracles he either dispenses with these forces altogether, or, what is more common, uses them only in part, producing an effect which can only partially be accounted for by them, in either case supplementing them but not in any way violating their laws.

But further, our modern theologians have come to see that miracles are not simply external attestations to the truth of a revelation, whose form is to be proved, in order that its contents may be implicitly accepted; but that they are rather constituent parts of the revelation itself. They make God known, unveil him, disclose his nature, teach his truth, communicate his grace. In the miracles God does in an extraordinary way, by means which we call supernatural as not being contained in the common system of natural forces, what in the inspired teachings of his servants he does in another extraordinary way. The miracle is a proof of God in the same way that the teachings of the prophets are a proof of God, because they make God known to men. It makes known not only God's power—though it does this signally—but also, and pre-eminently, his grace. Especially is this true of the miracles of Christ. They were revelations of the divine in him. He did, indeed, perform them by the power of the Holy Spirit, whose official endowment for the work of his ministry he received at his baptism, but they were at the same time the outpouring of the divine redemptive power of which he was personally the source. When he turned the water into wine at



Canan, he "manifested his glory" as the only-begotten Son incarnate (John ii. 11).

Thus our modern apologetics has come to give the miracles an entirely different place in the system of proofs from that which they used to occupy. The fact is recognized that owing to the inherent uncertainty of human testimony the miracles, taken by themselves, cannot have the same convincing force for us which they had for those who witnessed them, though, as I said a moment ago, it is to be borne in mind that even those original witnesses did not always accept their evidential value, while some actually ascribed them to the power of Satan (Matt. xii. 24 seq.). Therefore we do not rest the weight of the proof so exclusively upon them as we used to do. We take the miracles in their connection with the general system of revelation, point out their consistency with that revelation in its other forms, and show the relation in which they stand to Jesus Christ. Especially we show how the key-stone of the arch of miracles, namely, the resurrection of Christ, is the culmination of the whole revelation, as well as of the wonderful career of the Saviour; and how it is an integral part of the organism of redemptive revelation.

Thus we get a foothold for the miracles before we employ them at all in proof. We are able to show that it would itself be a miracle, if a revelation so utterly unique in the world's history were not to give proof of itself in outward nature, as well as in the hearts of men and the history of the race. We can make it plain that for such a being as the Christ not to have performed miracles would have been far more wonderful than that he should have performed the works actually ascribed to



him. We can point out the entire conformity of these miracles with the nature of the revelation and the character of Christ. In this way we are able to overcome the presumption, which must and ought to exist, against the occurrence of miracles (and which, although it does not—as Hume insisted—invalidate the testimony, yet does raise a *prima facie* case against it), and in its place to establish a presumption in favor of the miracles. It becomes the more important that we should avail ourselves of such a presumption, in order that we may be able successfully to meet the extravagant claims of the advocates of modern miracles, both Roman Catholic<sup>20</sup> and Protestant.<sup>21</sup> These persons—whose sincerity we cannot doubt, however much we may find fault with their theology and their practical judgment—also rely on testimony, and on the ground of it lay claim to a repetition of all the wonders of the apostolic age. We must be able to show that our testimony is better than theirs, and we do it by exhibiting the relation between the Scripture miracles and the redemptive revelation of which they formed a part, and especially their relation to Jesus Christ.

Modern evidential science thus makes the miracles not the main evidence of Christianity, but an important subordinate element in the organic system of the evidences. We are not disturbed by the objection that we reason in a circle, since we authenticate the miracles by the revelation, and then the revelation by the miracles; for we know that in all proof of facts or real existences such a procedure is not only justifiable, but to a certain extent necessary, on account of the organic relation of the different elements of the proof to each other. For the time being this kind of



evidence has fallen to some degree into disrepute. It used to be overdone, and we are suffering the consequences ; but I see no reason why in its reconstructed form the argument from miracles should not play a part as essential, if not as prominent, in the evidences of the future as it did in the system which prevailed at the beginning of the century.

I think there can be no question that our modern evangelical theologians are just as loyal to the miraculous element in the revelation as any of their predecessors. We do, indeed, feel the influences that are at work about us, and that tend to depreciate all belief in the supernatural and to give a naturalistic explanation of all things, religion included. But I doubt whether these influences affect us more with respect to our belief in miracles than with respect to our belief in the other parts of our system. We clearly recognize the fact that the Bible with the miraculous element eliminated would be an altogether mutilated and emasculated book. Christianity stands or falls with the miracles. Whoever denies them must, if he will be consistent, deny the other supernatural elements in Christianity. But it does not follow from this that we need to give them the same exclusive function in the evidences of Christianity which used to be assigned to them. It is certainly a great advance which has been made in this respect, and we shall feel it more and more as we come to recognize the fact that since we have thrown overboard our deistic encumbrances, most of the old attacks fail to reach us at all.

I have spoken thus at length—I fear, too much at length—of the evidence of miracles, before considering its relation to the evidence of Christian experience,



because the difference between the old and the new apologetics nowhere comes more fully to light than in their methods of dealing with this important branch of the Christian proofs. But though I have gone so far afield, I have all the time had in view the proper subject of this lecture, and to this I now come. Valuable as the proof from miracles is in the system of Christian evidences, especially in its reconstructed form, it, like the other historical proofs, manifests its full use and significance only when it is approached from the stand-point of the evidence of Christian experience. Even the believer, when he looks at the miracles merely from the historical side, often fails to grasp their true importance. But it is different when the experience of the Christian is the presupposition of his use of the miracles in proof. He has a personal knowledge of redemption, since it has been begun and is progressing in his own spiritual life. He stands in vital relations to the great Christian realities — God the Father, Christ the Saviour, the Holy Spirit, the kingdom of redemption. He is able, therefore, to recognize in the miracles a manifestation of the same power which is working in himself, and a revelation of the same realities.

In the first place, regeneration and the new life to which it has given rise are of the greatest importance in rendering the miracles credible.<sup>22</sup> The great change in which redemption gets its first firm foothold in the individual life has often been called a miracle, and not without reason, for the expression is more than a figure of speech. All evangelical theologians insist that regeneration is supernatural, in the sense of manifesting the immediate agency and activity of God in Christ



working through the Holy Spirit. In form, I am inclined to think, the claim that it is a miracle is inaccurate. A miracle in the strict meaning of the term is an event in external nature, and not in the spiritual realm. It is an event appearing in the *nexus* of physical effects, of which the cause is only partially or not at all to be identified with natural agencies, physical or human. In it God either uses no means or else makes only a partial use of means. To the first of these criteria regeneration does not correspond; it is a spiritual effect. But as regards the second criterion, the divine use of means, regeneration may be well called a miracle. God does, indeed, use means in effecting it, and these are in all ordinary cases essential. But the means only partially explain the result. We are not here in the sphere of second causes, as when we have to do with God's ordinary providence. No thoughtful man—much less an evangelical theologian—would ever rest satisfied with calling regeneration an act of God's providence. Over and above the means employed there is a direct working of the divine efficiency; or, to state the same fact in different words, in regeneration God works both through means and without means. It is this unmediated remainder which gives to regeneration its miraculous character. And what is true of regeneration is also true of the new life in its continuance; it is a continuous "miracle of grace."<sup>23</sup> We have here the essence of the miracle, though its form—namely, the effect in the physical world—is not present. Luther had a clear recognition of this fact when he said: "For these are the greatest of all miracles, that God through his Word makes our souls alive, that he will make our bodies to live at the last



day, that he baptizes us in his blood, and so washes away our sins that he daily vanquishes hell, death, sin, and the law." <sup>24</sup>

Now to one who has this personal experience of God in Christ, this inward miracle of grace, the miracles are not strange or incredible. They are accredited by the knowledge the Christian has of the power which gave rise to them and which has wrought such a change in himself. That the God of redemption should have seen fit, for the purpose of introducing the Christian redemption into the world, to use these outward miraculous means is wholly reasonable. The only question is, whether we are to expect miracles at the present time; and this question is answered in the negative, not through any doubt of God's ability, which is abundantly attested by the regenerative and sanctifying exercise of power to-day, but on the ground that the redemptive revelation is once for all in the world, and that the outward evidences of divine power which once were necessary are no longer requisite—a consideration which passes from presumption into proof when we examine the alleged miracles of our own day and find in them nothing that cannot be explained as the result of God's providence. The Christian who has thought out the data of his own spiritual life has no trouble about miracles. It is only the rationalistic Christian, who will not make use of the facts within, who finds himself offended by the miraculous element in the Scriptures and is on the alert to explain it away, as far as it is possible to do so. It is the firm possession and the scientific use of the experience within that makes the miracles credible.

The famous words with which Hume concludes his



Essay on Miracles were undoubtedly insincere, being intended to express scorn and contempt for the belief of Christians. But Caiaphas is not the only high-priest in the course of human history who has prophesied with a deeper insight than he was conscious of. Our recent Christian thought, which has come into a deeper and truer understanding of Christianity than that of the age in which Hume lived, is content to take the sceptic's words as true, though in a sense which he did not perceive in them. Hume says, "Upon the whole we may conclude that the Christian Revelation not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity; and whoever is moved by faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is contrary to custom and experience."<sup>26</sup> The great doubter is right in the main point which he makes; it is the "continued miracle" (or what is in its deepest meaning tantamount to a miracle), of which the believer is conscious in his own person, that gives the crowning proof of the possibility of the miracles, and so bestows upon the miracles themselves their highest value as evidences of Christianity.

This relation of the Christian's experience to the evidence of miracles is further confirmed by the fact that through his experience he is enabled to understand and give due weight to the inner meaning of the miracles. They are, as we have seen, revelations of God, manifestations of the same redemptive grace which found expression in the teachings of the Master and



his disciples, and in the life of the Master himself. The Christian experiences this redemptive grace in his own life. He experiences it as coming to him from the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. He knows it as the child knows its mother's touch or tones. In the miracles, as they are recorded in the Scriptures, he recognizes the same characteristics. The power which produced them is clearly seen to be the same power that is working in his soul, because the same love, the same truth, the same grace, are displayed in them. The Christian who reads of the miracles recorded by the sacred writers comes to his own. It is not the physical power exhibited in a miracle which authenticates it, but the spiritual features stamped upon it. We read of the miracles recorded in the apocryphal gospels, or in ecclesiastical history, with very different feelings; they belong to a wholly different sphere; even though, for the sake of argument, we should concede their truth, yet they bear no evidence of having come from our God. The same impression is made when we come to examine the alleged miracles of modern times. What we discover here is not our Lord manifesting God's love in the sphere of outward nature, and doing it with that divine economy which was intended to guard against the abuse of the miraculous; but men invoking the miraculous for their own selfish ends, turning the Christian church away from its distinctively spiritual work and endeavoring to transform it into an eleemosynary institution for the healing of all diseased bodies. One wonders whether the claimants of modern miracles have any understanding at all of the purpose of the divine grace within.



Very different is it with the Bible miracles as they are interpreted by a living Christian faith. They are seen to be divine, because they are so truly the manifestation of that redemptive power already known in experience. Thus understood, they become evidence for the truth of Christianity of very high value and indisputable cogency.

III. We have now to consider the relation of the evidence of Christian experience to the evidence of prophecy. This topic does not demand as extended treatment as that with which we have just been engaged. It will be sufficient to indicate only the most important points of view.

The modern evidences do not lay so much stress as did the old upon the fulfilment of definite and detailed prophecies, though they do not leave this out of account. They rather concentrate their thought upon the great organic prophecy which runs through the whole Bible, connecting the Old-Testament with the New, and both with the future of Christianity. The central fact in this prophecy is the progress and consummation of the redemptive kingdom of God as realized in the Christ, who, with all the power and the grace of the Godhead concentrated in his divinely human person, is at last to reign in the perfected kingdom King of kings and Lord of lords. Yet the more definite predictions of particular historical events occurring in the progress of the kingdom also find a place, though the argument from this kind of prophecies is presented with more caution than of old, when undoubtedly many of the alleged predictions produced would not bear the interpretation placed upon them.<sup>26</sup>

Unquestionably prophecy in so far as it has been



fulfilled is a most convincing proof of a supernatural power at work in the prediction and the events which constituted its fulfilment. But in the interpretation of history, as has already been remarked, much depends upon the presuppositions we bring to the examination. Men like Buckle and Draper find in history only the working out of physical laws. If we could make men actually see the fulfilment of prophecy, we might convince their intellects, if we did not change their hearts. But men are not so quick to see as we would have them, and the opponents of Christianity know how to put such an interpretation upon the alleged facts of prophecy as to give them a purely naturalistic explanation. Our modern Hegelian philosophers and Spencerian evolutionists appear themselves among the prophets and indulge in vaticinations based upon their knowledge of the laws of human progress. Even those who are favorably disposed toward Christianity often stand in doubt as to how far they are justified upon historical grounds in finding a supernatural element in the predictions of the Scriptures.

But the Christian, who has in his own experience verified the truth of the Gospel and come into personal contact with the Christian realities, approaches the subject in a very different way. Prediction and fulfilment meet in his inner life. The divine redemptive power is working in him. He is himself in a true sense a prophet. The same Spirit who inspired the holy men of old, giving them the supernatural knowledge of God and his purposes which enabled them to deliver their prophetic message, dwells in him, enabling him by his illumination to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. The Christian, thus illuminated,



knows the connection of the divine redemption with the past ; he understands its meaning for the future. Christ, the great fact of scriptural prophecy, is the great fact of his consciousness. The kingdom of God, which is the final cause of all progress in the redemptive working of God, is within him ; and he is within it. His own life is the progressive fulfilment of a prophecy, of which he first became aware when the Gospel call came to him—the prophecy that whoever accepts Christ's grace shall be born again, made partaker of eternal life, sanctified, strengthened for service, and at last saved in God's everlasting kingdom.<sup>27</sup>

The Christian, therefore, is able to give the argument from prophecy a fuller and deeper meaning than the old apologetics could ever find in it. To him it is only a single element in the evidence that in all ages of the world's history the triune God has been active in redemption, and that the good work which has been begun will go steadily forward to its completion. It is not, and cannot be, strange to him that God should assure the world of this fact in supernatural ways, either by making known the great crises in the future of his kingdom or by disclosing particular events in its progress.

IV. We shall next examine the relation in which the experimental proof stands to the evidence derived from the person and work of Jesus Christ. This, as was noticed in the first lecture,<sup>28</sup> stands on the border between the historical and rational evidences, belonging to both. Unquestionably the fiercest theological battles of our century have been waged around the person of Jesus of Nazareth. A general agreement has been reached among the enemies and friends of



Christian truth with respect to the historical existence of the man Jesus and the substantial accuracy of the Gospel story concerning him, at least so far as its non-miraculous contents are concerned. Since Strauss published his first *Leben Jesu*, in which he applied the mythical theory to the explanation of the New-Testament narratives respecting Jesus Christ, the warfare has been constant, and to-day it is still going on. There is a conviction on both sides that the Christian view of Christ, according to which he is the incarnate Son of God come to earth for the redemption of mankind, the Christ of the virgin mother, of the miracles, of the resurrection and ascension, the Christ who died that he might save the world—there is a conviction, I say, that this is the citadel of the Christian faith. The aim of the opponents of Christianity—upon the accomplishment of which they have lavished the resources of a scholarship and literary skill which their adversaries cannot choose but admire, however much they may deprecate the use to which it is put—has been to show that Jesus was a mere man, and that his person, teachings, and work are susceptible of a natural explanation. The aim of the scholars who have conducted the warfare on the Christian side—with equal learning and skill—has been to show that Christ was what he claimed to be, the Son of God, the God-man, the Saviour of the world.

In the fight, which has been obstinate and bitter, we may say, I think, without hesitation that the Christian side have won the victory at every point. They have proved the historical character of the Gospel records on grounds of both internal and external criticism. They have so set forth the Christ of history in



all the reality of that wonderful life of his, that the Son of God has been shown to be the only satisfactory explanation of the Son of Man; the *Ecce Homo* involving the *Ecce Deus*. The simple historical facts are the highest proof. Here is a personality wholly unique, a manhood so true, so high, so noble, that we are not guilty of an exaggeration when we call it a "moral miracle." It is out of the course of nature as it now exists in this sinful world, and can be accounted for only upon the hypothesis of an immediate divine intervention. The man, the works, the teachings, all match each other, and afford a *tout ensemble*, the only explanation of which is the acceptance of his claim to divinity. It is one of the greatest achievements of modern apologetics that it has accomplished through Christian scholarship, preserved in a literature destined to have more than a passing value, what the art of the Middle Ages unsuccessfully attempted; it has given us a perfect picture of the God-man in the union of the ideal and the real. The Saviour as he is presented, for example, in such a work as the *Life of Christ*, by Bernard Weiss,<sup>29</sup> is a possession forever, a consummate reproduction of theological art, if I may be allowed to use the expression.

Not until recent times did the world possess this true and noble conception of the Christ of history. I wonder that any one who reads the Gospels with the aids put into his hands by recent scholarship can help being profoundly impressed with the divine character of Christ. It is interesting to see how far the unbelief of our time has gone in the recognition of the unique and typical manhood of Jesus, and in conceding the necessity of making a religious use of the ideal



which Christ's manhood furnishes. The unbelief of a century ago did not hesitate, at least through some of its representatives, to speak of Jesus as an impostor. Strauss represented the real Jesus whom he permitted to exist behind the glowing myths recorded in the Gospels as a very ordinary human being. But such a view is now impossible, except among the thoughtless and ignorant. Even the flippant Renan<sup>30</sup> has felt the need of striking a higher key. It is much gained that the minimum of concession made by modern unbelief is the recognition of Christ's unique manhood and its moral and religious importance.

Now I do not doubt that the evidence for the truth of Christianity thus furnished has its important preliminary use in bringing men to the recognition of the evidence of experience, and inducing them to submit themselves to the conditions under which its possession is possible. In so far, it precedes the latter and is its essential prerequisite. Very many men have been led along the pathway of this proof to the Christ himself, as the story of Andrew and Philip brought Simon and Nathanael to the Saviour (John i. 40-51). Nevertheless, I am inclined to think that if we are to secure the full value which belongs to the evidence of the Master's person and work, we must approach it from the stand-point of the experimental evidence. At the best the historical evidence respecting the Christ, if we confine ourselves to it and seek no aid from Christian experience, gives us the picture of a Saviour who lived nearly nineteen centuries ago. It is a picture rather than a reality. Thus viewed, it is wonderful in its influence; it has power to move our deepest æsthetic and even religious emotions. If a man has any spirit-



ual susceptibility at all, he must be touched and thrilled by this marvelous personality and life. Still, when all is said, the evidence remains incomplete. Jesus is not a man like Socrates or Plato, whose person and work we value for what they bring to us through historical channels. Christ was the God-man on earth; but only on condition that he is the God-man now, exalted on the heavenly throne, the King of God's kingdom, the Lord of every Christian heart.

The evidence of Christian experience is based upon the knowledge of the living, glorified Christ, the present Saviour and Lord, known in and through the work he has wrought in the Christian's life. The believer did, it is true, originally learn of him through the Gospels, and knew him rather as the Christ who lived and died than as the Christ who liveth for evermore (Rev. i. 18). Or if he thought of Christ as the present Lord, it was vaguely, with no certainty and definiteness of conception. But this was only the prelude to the personal knowledge, a knowledge which became certain and satisfying in the initial experience of the Christian life. In that wonderful and never-to-be-forgotten experience the Christian learned to know Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour, who comes to his soul through the Holy Spirit, bringing forgiveness and new life; and all his subsequent experience has served to deepen and strengthen his knowledge, and to make it more definite and real. Now let a man come to the proof derived from the historical aspect of the Saviour's person and work with this knowledge, and the whole nature of the proof is changed. In the picture the living Lord is recognized. This earthly Jesus of the four Gospels is no longer a far-off being,



to be known only through the intellect; he is the Lord of the Christian's present knowledge, known in the loving fellowship of the whole man. The fact of the correspondence between the two, trait for trait, deed for deed, gives the highest value and meaning to the historical evidence. The difficulties in the earthly life of Christ disappear. The wonder is, not that such a marvelous life was lived, and such a marvelous work done on earth, but rather that the Divine in him did not burst forth with a radiance so great as to compel even the enemies of religion to admit his claims.

I spoke of the picture of the Christ given us in the modern Christian delineation of his person, contained in the better works on the Saviour's life, as the union of the ideal and the real. But the statement was not wholly accurate. So long as we have to do merely with the historical elements furnished us by the Gospel writers, we get neither the real nor the ideal in their entirety, and the union of the two is of necessity imperfect. We see the actual man Jesus through the vista of the centuries, in circumstances in a measure foreign to us, and in surroundings far different from ours. We see the ideal, the higher element in him, struggling with the hindrances and obstructions of the state of humiliation, in which he was, for the sake of his great work, for a little time lower than the angels. But all is changed when we approach the subject from the side of the evidence of Christian experience. The knowledge which the Christian has of the Christ in glory, the Saviour who has revealed himself to his soul through the Holy Spirit, gives the missing elements in the conception of the Christ that comes to us through the objective history. The Christ of nineteen



hundred years ago is made real to the Christian through his personal acquaintance with the Saviour to-day, an acquaintance that reveals the same traits which we find delineated in the Gospels, though in more intimate knowledge. It is as when one reads the biography of a man he has known intimately, but with whom he has been acquainted only in his later life. The man as described in his childhood and young manhood is made real through this later knowledge and its correspondence with the picture painted in the memoir. I know the young man of the book as one who had not known the elder man of my acquaintance could not do. My knowledge at first-hand blends with the knowledge I get from the book in the unity and beauty of a single conception.

So it is with the ideal element in the conception of the Saviour. The perfect manhood of Christ, which is the incarnation of Deity, is known to the Christian in the holy influences by which he has been regenerated and carried forward in the Christian life. And if the manhood, still more the Deity, and with the manhood and the Deity, the saving offices of the God-man—his prophetic, priestly, and kingly functions. This knowledge, transferred to the historical picture of Christ, gives it warmth and life and reality. Thus in the Saviour of the four Gospels we find the union of the real and the ideal, the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.<sup>21</sup>



## LECTURE X.

### RELATION TO OTHER EVIDENCES: CONCLUSION.

IN this closing lecture I am to complete the examination, begun when we last met, of the relation of the experimental evidence to the other evidences for the truth of Christianity. We turn now from the historical proofs and the proof from the person and work of Christ, which is partly historical and partly rational, to the rational and practical evidences.

First, then, we consider the rational. They have to do with Christianity as a system of truth. For the most part these evidences have occupied a prominent place in apologetics. But defenders of Christianity have not been wanting who have viewed them with disfavor and emphasized the historical evidences at their expense. Thus Dr. Chalmers finds fault with Leland for his rational arguments and disclaims all support in his own treatise from this species of reasoning.<sup>1</sup> But in spite of the contrary opinion of the eminent theologians who have taken this position, I cannot think we do right in repudiating this branch of the Christian evidences. That it has been abused is undoubtedly true. But this has also been the case with the historical evidence. The reason has been the same in both cases, namely, the failure to bring these proofs into vital connection with the proof from Christian experience. This I showed in the last lecture, so far as



the historical evidences are concerned. I now shall attempt to do the same in the case of the rational.

V. I shall take up first what might be called the preliminary rational evidence, namely, that derived from the antecedent probability of a revelation. This appears, in one form or another, in all the systems of apologetics. It starts from the position of the theistic philosophy of religion, that there is a God, and this God such an One as stands in those relations to his rational creatures which render a revelation possible. Then it argues from human finiteness, and especially from human sin, the need of a revelation. In this way it seeks to overthrow the presumption against Christianity as a system of supernatural agencies, and to open the way for the more direct and positive evidence of its truth.

The common objection is that such *à priori* reasoning begs the whole question at issue by assuming that apart from experience we are able to form a judgment as to whether the Supreme Being would meet the need of his finite and sinful creatures in this way.<sup>2</sup> We have no right, it is claimed, to assert that God cannot supply man's want in natural ways, without having recourse to supernatural or miraculous means.

Now I am far from admitting that this objection is well-founded. The Christian—looking merely at the need of man, the inadequacy of natural religion, and the goodness and power of God—has a right to assert the reasonableness of a special or supernatural revelation. The position he takes is confirmed by the undoubted fact that the expectation, and in part the assurance, of the existence of such a revelation finds a place in all the ethnic religions. It is true that the



subject has often been too narrowly presented, the revelation in doctrine being emphasized at the expense of the revelation in redemptive power. But this defect is incidental to the statement of the argument, not essential, and it is capable of easy correction. I do not see how the way can be opened for the rational—or, indeed, for the historical and practical—evidence, unless this antecedent probability be granted.

But the preliminary assent which is given to this argument by the man who is not yet a Christian, and who deals with the subject wholly as a matter of rational presumption, is very different from the acceptance accorded to it by the Christian, who has felt in himself the force of the experimental evidence. The former has no such knowledge of his own need or of God's nature and power as can enable him satisfactorily to solve the problem of revelation. At most it will be a matter of likelihood, greater or less. He may assent cordially, and the assent may be sufficient to lead him to examine Christianity for himself, to see if it is indeed the revelation it claims to be. Yet there must always be an element of uncertainty, a helplessness in the presence of objections, which cannot be overcome.

Very different, however, is the position of the Christian, who approaches the subject from the side of his experience. He knows that God has made a revelation, for he has tested the fact by putting the alleged revelation to the trial. He has thus gained such a knowledge of God, as well as of the depth and awfulness of human need, as enables him to perceive the antecedent probability of God's action in a way that would be impossible for the man who has had no such experience. He does not, indeed, undertake to limit



God to any one particular mode of action. He is careful not to assert the necessity of a redemptive revelation in such a way as to make it a matter of debt rather than of grace. But in the light of what God has actually done he is able to see what might be reasonably expected of God, and he knows that the claim of antecedent probability is well-founded.

VI. This brings us to what is commonly called the "internal evidence" for the truth of Christianity. This is the evidence derived from the reasonableness or intrinsic excellence of the Christian system of doctrine. It is presented from various points of view. The truth of Christianity is argued from the correspondence of the Christian doctrines with the character of God as known through the natural revelation. The love and Fatherhood of God, the incarnation with its manifestation of the divine condescension, the person of the God-man, his saving work, and especially his atoning death upon the cross, the mission of the Spirit, the founding of the Christian church, the gracious gift of forgiveness and sonship to all who accept the Saviour in faith, the work of sanctification, the coming triumph of the kingdom, the final overthrow of evil, the glories and happiness of the heavenly state—these are doctrines worthy of God. We cannot explain them as of human production. They bear upon them the marks of that perfect Being who has made himself known to us in nature. They can only be explained as a revelation from him.

The reasonableness of the Christian doctrines is also evinced by their consonance with human need. They come to sinful man with the offer of a divine redemption, pointing him to the finished work of a Saviour at



once divine and human, offering him God's grace on the simplest conditions, setting before him a system of divine spiritual agencies by which he is enabled to become holy, happy, and serviceable in God's kingdom here, and blessed in the eternal hereafter. In a word, there is presented to sinful man all the knowledge of the divine redemption requisite to his deliverance from sin and his attainment of the chief end of his existence. It is just what man needs, and commends itself as such to his reason.

Moreover, the Christian system of doctrine evinces its reasonableness by its internal coherence and harmony. The truths of revelation lend themselves without difficulty to the construction of an organic and well-ordered whole. A "body of divinity" is the outcome of systematic dealing with Christian truth. One of the evidences of the truth of physical science is the fact that the truths and facts of nature are thus susceptible of harmonious and orderly arrangement. The so-called "natural systems" of botany and zoölogy are a proof, not to be despised, that the facts upon which those sciences are alleged to rest are actually existent; the parts of the system stand to each other in such relations of coherence and harmony as to carry with them the evidence of their truth. A similar impression is made upon one who studies the Christian doctrines in the connection of the system of theology. Here is not a mass of isolated dogmas and precepts, but an organic whole of knowledge, growing out of a single principle. Part matches part, and all the parts conspire to exhibit and attain the common end.

And then these doctrines taken separately show their intrinsic rationality. They appeal to the reason



of man as true. They are in accordance with his highest moral and spiritual intuitions.

I am disposed to attach a very high value to this evidence of Christian truth, even in its preliminary use, before the light of the experimental evidence is thrown upon it. It is the fashion in our days to decry systematic theology and to depreciate doctrinal instruction, whether given from the pulpit or in the family and the school. We have reacted from the scholastic forms in which the Christian doctrines were presented while the influence of rationalism was still strongly felt, and the unthinking masses—and not a few who ought to be their guides rather than their followers—have raised the cry, “Enough of doctrine! let us have Christianity in its living form.” As if life could ever be divorced from doctrine, as if fact could be separated from truth! I need not stop to show how absurd this outcry against doctrine is. No thoughtful and spiritual Christian can entertain it for a moment.

I insist, then, on the importance of the evidence derived from the reasonableness of the Christian system of doctrine. In view of this fact I would urge that doctrinal preaching have a larger place in the ministrations of the pulpit than is now commonly accorded to it. I would also urge the more general use of our better works on systematic divinity. Systems of theology have their value as a preparation for the personal acceptance of Christ. In times like ours, when almost all the distinctive truths of Christianity are assailed and misrepresented, it is well that we can point the doubter and the inquirer to the scientific presentations of theology which are the glory of our age. The difficulties respecting Christianity with which

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people are troubled are due in large part to gross ignorance of what the Christian system is. These difficulties are aggravated by the fact that the church has become derelict in her duty, and not only has let doctrinal preaching fall into neglect, but also—which is still worse—no longer gives the young the systematic doctrinal instruction that alone can enable them fully and fairly to understand what Christian truth is.

A great deal is said in these days against the Westminster Catechism. I admit that it is not milk for babes, and also that its statements of doctrine are not in all respects abreast of the age. But until we get a better summary of Christian doctrine, let us use it. And then, let our pastors and religious instructors follow it up with systematic doctrinal teaching in such forms as are adapted to the needs of the young and will best imbue them with the truth.

Men need to know what Christian doctrine is. The flippant infidel imposes upon our people by his misrepresentations of Christianity. The doctrines of the Trinity, the atonement, and future punishment are made bugbears by the grossest misstatements. Let us open the windows and admit fresh air. The foolish outcry against theology ought not to find the excuse it does in the sluggishness of the theologians themselves. Make theology better known. Express it in forms that will render it clear to the thought of our times. Let the people see its reasonableness. If we need to have the old confessions of faith revised, so as to make them intelligible to the masses, let us revise them.<sup>3</sup> God's truth is too good and great to be hidden under any bushel, however venerable and highly prized. There must be progress in theology as in other sciences. Not



in new truth, for there is none ; but in new statements of truth. Not less of God's truth but more of it, is what we want.

Yet when all is said respecting the importance of the evidence from the reasonableness of the Christian system, it is not to be denied that this evidence is practically limited in its use when it is employed apart from the evidence of Christian experience. At most it presents Christianity to the intellect as a system of truth. It deals with notions rather than realities. It is as far from being the fact as a picture is from being the landscape which it represents. It has its great value for the young, for sincere doubters, for earnest seekers after the truth. It has its value in shutting the mouth of the infidel who attempts to refute Christianity by misrepresenting it. But there is a point beyond which it cannot go. As a matter of fact, there are many, and those by no means exclusively the active opponents of Christianity, to whom the distinctive doctrines of Christianity are the chief objections to it. They declare, and we cannot doubt that they are in many instances entirely honest, that they do not regard the Christian system of doctrine as reasonable. It does not seem to them correspondent with the character of God. It does not meet human need. It is not self-consistent. Above all, it does not commend itself to their moral and spiritual intuitions.

The attempt has been made to meet this difficulty by declaring that the more distinctive Christian doctrines, such as those of the Trinity, regeneration, the atonement, and the like, are mysteries—not indeed contrary to reason but above reason. A distinction



which originated among the German Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century, has been made between the *articuli mixti* and the *articuli puri*,<sup>4</sup> the former those doctrines of revelation which are also to a greater or less extent truths of natural religion, such as the doctrines of God, sin, etc., and the latter the doctrines belonging exclusively to revelation. But such distinctions fail to afford relief. The argument fails, if the distinctively Christian doctrines are to be withdrawn from the judgment of the reason. It becomes impossible to answer the opponent who declares that they are unreasonable.

From the point of view of these lectures, and in the light of the evidence of Christian experience, it is not difficult to explain the limitations of the proof from the reasonableness of the Christian system. It cannot commend itself to the unconverted man *per se*. To a certain extent the *anima naturaliter Christiana* in him may respond to it. If he allows himself to yield to this influence, he may have a preliminary evidence of the truth of Christianity which, in connection with the other probable evidences, will serve to lead him to make personal trial. But, as we have seen,<sup>5</sup> the facts of Christianity must be unintelligible in their true nature to the unconverted man, and the doctrines which attempt to convey an impression of these facts must partake of the same unintelligibility. If a man is indifferent to the influences of the divine Spirit working in his heart or actually turns from it, the case is aggravated; the distinctive doctrines of the Christian system are not only unintelligible but repugnant and absurd. You cannot make such a man, while he remains in this state, see the reasonableness of the



Christian truths.<sup>6</sup> He must have a Christian experience and a divine illumination before this result can be brought about. I do not deny the possibility of a *theologia irrogenitorum*,<sup>7</sup> but I assert that it will not and cannot be a Christian theology ; inevitably it will be some form of rationalism.<sup>8</sup>

But let a man be in possession of the evidence of Christian experience, and the whole state of things is altered. Then the proof from the reasonableness of the Christian system of doctrine becomes full and convincing. The Christian knows of no *articuli puri* which are above reason in the sense that reason does not judge and approve them. He does, indeed, admit that the distinctive doctrines of Christianity are mysterious,<sup>9</sup> but so are the doctrines of natural religion, and mysteriousness is not opposed to reasonableness. The illuminated reason of the Christian finds the Christian doctrines wholly rational. As has been truly said by one of the ablest of our modern writers upon the evidences, "Christianity does not charge reason itself, but *unregenerate* reason, with incapacity to discern the things of the Spirit. Regenerated reason finds nothing contradictory to itself, or uncongenial, in the Christian system."<sup>10</sup> The Christian finds the truths of Christian theology consonant with the character of God, agreeable to the needs of men, self-consistent and harmonious, accordant with the highest moral and spiritual principles. It will be understood that in saying this I am not speaking of the scholastic, doctrinal, or metaphysical questions which divide the sects, but of the great Gospel doctrines accepted by all evangelical Christians.

The ground of this hearty acceptance of the internal



evidence is manifest. He who comes to the proof already in possession of the evidence of Christian experience knows the facts which the doctrines describe. His knowledge is not notional but real. He is not dealing with abstractions but with facts. In declaring the Christian doctrines reasonable he is not comparing notion with notion in his mind, or subjecting notions to some arbitrary mental standard; he is verifying the notion by a comparison with the reality. He declares the doctrine to be reasonable because it corresponds to the fact.

It is just at this point that our modern apologetical science makes its most marked advance upon the old evidences. As we have had occasion more than once to notice, the apologetics that prevailed at the beginning of the present century—deistic and rationalistic, in spite of its long struggle with deism and rationalism—was cautious of admitting the exercise of reason in the judgment of the truth of the Christian revelation.<sup>11</sup> It assigned to reason a legitimate sphere and function in judging and accrediting the credentials of the redemptive revelation, which it regarded chiefly as a system of doctrine. But when this was done, it declared that it was the duty of reason to bow before the divine authority and to accept the contents of the revelation upon the *ipse dixit* of the divine Author. It was said that the truths of revelation are not contrary to reason but above reason. Thus no attempt could be made to exhibit the reasonableness of the Christian doctrines themselves; or if this was done to a certain extent with those doctrines which revelation holds in common with natural religion, yet the Christian mysteries, the *articuli puri*, were placed in a separate cate-



gory as dogmas to be accepted merely upon the authority of revelation, without endeavoring to reconcile them to our reason.

Modern apologetical science has discovered the defect of the old position and has corrected it. Or rather it has gone back to the still older apologetics of the Puritan theologians. We make no such distinction now as used to be made, between the credentials of revelation and the revelation itself, that is, between its form and its contents. We recognize the fact that it is utterly impossible to separate the two. We cannot prove the revelation by miracles and prophecy, and then be assured *eo ipso* of the truth of all its doctrines. Men have but one organ of knowledge, and they can accept nothing as true that does not conform to its criteria. Reason is just as needful in judging of the contents of revelation as of its form. If revelation contradicted our reason, we could not accept it. The great thing is to use our reason aright, to adapt it to the sphere of knowledge with which we are concerned. The old rationalism was faulty, not in that it made reason the organ by which we judge of the claims of revelation, but in that it supposed that reason could evolve from itself all the facts with which it has to do; in other words, in that it did not look to experience for the facts. Thus it made quick work of all that is distinctive in Christianity. But this is the abuse of reason, not its use. We need not fly to the other extreme and abjure the use of our reason altogether. What we need as rational beings to do, is to use our reason aright.<sup>12</sup>

Our modern theology, taking this middle and rational course, has come to see that it is possible so to use our



reason upon the contents of Christian truth as to show that the doctrines of Christianity embody the highest reason and give us that final truth in which the human mind can rest satisfied. But in order to do this fully and satisfactorily, we must have the experience upon which Christian doctrine is based. We must know the great facts. Whatever is real is in the highest sense reasonable, even though the *quomodo* of it may be a mystery.

Let us look, by way of illustration, at two of the more important Christian doctrines. It has been declared that the doctrine of the Trinity is a mere dogma, to be received because it is taught by revelation. But this kind of reasoning brought about the Unitarian defection. As a matter of fact, the doctrine of the Trinity is to the Christian who knows how to use his experience aright, the most reasonable of all the scriptural doctrines, since it is the deepest and most essential. In the believer's religious life the sacred Three—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—are known directly and personally. They are the fundamental facts of all the experience of the regenerate soul. They are the fixed lights in the spiritual firmament. The doctrine which confirms and formulates this fact of experience is in the highest sense reasonable. It is as reasonable as those teachings of astronomy which confirm our daily knowledge of sun and moon and stars. True, the doctrine is a mystery. But what fact is not a mystery? If we found no mysteries reasonable, our rational knowledge would be limited enough.<sup>13</sup>

Or take the doctrine of the atonement. This, as perhaps no other doctrine of the Christian system, seems to the unconverted man lacking in reason, because it



has to do with an experience that none can comprehend save those who have passed through it. Even those Christians who have not learned to make a theological use of their inward life find trouble with it. That the God-man should be our substitute and perform for us the great vicarious sacrifice on the basis of which the sinner's guilt is forgiven, seems strange and incomprehensible. We need not wonder at this. From the first days of Christianity Christ crucified has been to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor. i. 23). Only to the Christian, who is alive to the fulness of the treasure within, can he be the power of God and the wisdom of God. We try to explain the atonement according to the principles of ordinary human experience and we inevitably fail, getting perhaps no farther than some meagre moral influence theory.<sup>14</sup> But he who in his own inward life has come in contact with the actual power of the atonement, who has felt himself forgiven and reinstated in God's favor on the ground of the Saviour's work, who knows that it is possible to be pardoned for another's sake, such an one finds the great Christian doctrine in the fullest sense reasonable.<sup>15</sup>

VII. Still another rational argument, closely connected with the two already mentioned, is derived from the answer which Christianity gives to the great fundamental questions of existence; in other words, the argument derived from Christianity as a philosophy. Let us see in what relation the evidence of Christian experience stands to this form of rational proof.

The object of philosophy is to disclose to us the first causes of things, enabling us to bring all knowledge into the unity of a system, governed by a single prin-



ciple. A philosophy is a rational explanation of the universe in its principles. Now undoubtedly Christianity is far more than a philosophy. It is practical. It deals primarily with the will, and involves the feelings as well as the intellect. Yet so far as Christianity involves a knowledge concerning the first principles of the universe, it furnishes a philosophy. Its doctrines of God, of the Trinity, of creation, of man, answer the ontological and cosmological questions of philosophy. Its doctrines of sin, the fall, the atonement, redemption, answer the moral questions. Its doctrine of the redemptive kingdom of God furnishes the teleological solution of the world's problem.

The history of philosophy has a sad and discouraging side to it. The great systems have followed each other in monotonous succession, each flourishing for a time, only to fall into decadence and give place to the next. One of the most popular modern writers on the history of philosophy—I refer to George Henry Lewes—has said: “Every day the conviction gains strength that philosophy is condemned, by the very nature of its impulses, to wander forever in one tortuous labyrinth, within whose circumscribed and winding spaces weary thinkers are continually finding themselves in the trodden tracks of predecessors, who, they know, could find no exit. Philosophy has been ever in movement, but the movement has been circular; and this fact is thrown into stronger relief by contrast with the linear progress of science.”<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, this able author proceeds to write a history, the object of which is to show “how and why the interest in philosophy has become purely historical.”<sup>17</sup>

There seems to be a certain amount of truth in



Lewes's position. There is something lacking in all the philosophies. None of them keep the promise with which they begin. Their inherent weakness is shown in their religious aspects, in the uncertainty and unsatisfactory nature of the results they attain in the highest department of human thought. But Christianity supplies us with the elements which the philosophies lack, with the key by which their locked doors are opened.<sup>18</sup>

Viewed simply as a theory of existence, a *Weltanschauung*, Christianity is immeasurably superior to any of the non-Christian philosophies. It is interesting to note how those early Christian Fathers who had come under the influence of the Greek, and especially the Platonic, philosophy—men like Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria—emphasize this aspect of Christianity. The heathen philosophy had sharpened their desire for the final truth, but had failed to satisfy it. Christianity came to them with the very help they needed.

Our modern apologetics is coming more and more to realize the power of this argument. The time has passed for Christianity to hide itself behind the shelter of authority, even though the authority be that of a divine revelation. If it is true, or rather, since it is true, let it stand out in the light and take its place alongside of the other philosophies. We are not afraid that it will suffer by the rivalry. It is not so weak as to need artificial protection. We believe that its truth is the key to all truth. Amidst the theories and schemes of the philosophers let this take its chance as a theory. Let it stand on its own merits. We ask only that it be fairly tried. It has stood the



storms and strains of nearly nineteen centuries. It has seen hundreds of philosophical systems arise and fall. We believe that it will stand the storms of nineteen centuries more, if the present order of things should last so long.

But, as I said a moment ago, Christianity is not merely a philosophy. Hegel represented religion and philosophy as the same.<sup>19</sup> But this is not the case. Religion is practical as well as theoretical, and theoretical because practical. Philosophy is wholly theoretical. Now in order that a man may understand Christianity as a philosophy, he must know it practically. If any man willeth to do God's will he shall know of the doctrine; that is the law in this highest sphere of knowledge. The evidence of Christian experience is the precondition of the full use and appreciation of the evidence derived from Christianity viewed as a philosophy. Pico of Mirandola said: "*Philosophia veritatem quærit, theologia invenit, religio possidet.*"<sup>20</sup> We want here the union of the three, and we need especially to make sure of the possession. Let us reverse the order, and with religion in possession, we may be sure that theology and philosophy will likewise possess the truth.

It is the man who knows the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit in his own experience, who has been regenerated and is a partaker of eternal life, who is living in the kingdom of God,—it is this man who has found his bearings in the universe and possesses a satisfactory solution of its profoundest problems. He has discovered the one principle by which all things can be reduced to the unity of a harmonious system. In Jesus Christ, by whom and to whom are



all things, he has attained the true centre of the organism of truth and knows how to bring all truth into its proper relations. As time goes on, we shall come more and more to recognize this fact and to give it its true theoretical significance.<sup>21</sup>

VIII. The last of the rational arguments which I shall mention here is that derived from the comparison of Christianity with the other religions of mankind. This I shall treat very briefly.<sup>22</sup> It needs only a superficial knowledge of the faiths of men as represented in the ethnic religions to show the immense superiority of Christianity. The careful and painstaking study to which these faiths have been subjected in modern times has not resulted in changing this verdict. We gladly recognize the elements of truth which all the ethnic systems contain, and see in them the proof that God has not deserted the heathen, but has been educating them for the reception of his redemptive revelation. We do not hesitate to admit that many of the moral precepts and spiritual principles once thought peculiar to Christianity are to be found in the sacred books of the ethnic religions. But when all is said, we ask only that Christianity should be placed alongside of these systems, assured that its immense moral and spiritual superiority must manifest itself to every candid mind.

For—to say nothing of the fact that the truth of the non-Christian religions is embedded in a setting of error—it is not the individual precepts and doctrines which make up Christianity. It is a religion of power rather than of word. It aims at the redemption of men from sin and is based upon a system of divine supernatural acts and agencies by which this redemp-



tion is effected. It is the religion of redemption through a Saviour at once divine and human—in a word, the religion of Christ. It is thus distinguished from all other religions, and it manifests its truth not only by its appeal to the intellect and to the universal sense of need, but also by its actual accomplishment of redemption. A superficial comparison may seem to find in some forms of heathen religion the same redemptive principles. But we have but to make the comparison in details to see how fallacious this view is. How utterly different, for example, is Buddhism, the religion which shares with Christianity the claim to be a religion of redemption. Contrast the heaven of the Christian, with its eternal blessedness in communion with God and Christ, its consummation and abundance of life, and the Nirvana of the Buddhist. Contrast the asceticism of the Buddhistic withdrawal from the world and the active service of the Christian in the kingdom of God. Contrast Gautama Buddha and Jesus the Christ.<sup>23</sup>

But strong as this argument is, even to the unprejudiced unbeliever, it finds its full strength only when it has been preceded by the evidence of Christian experience. For to know Christianity at its full worth it must be known from the inside. The man who stands in the midst of its supernatural world of divine realities, who has experienced in his own person its redemptive power, knows that it differs from the heathen religions as reality from appearance, as truth from error, as light from darkness. "In Cicero and Plato and other such writers," said Augustin, "I meet with many things acutely said, and things that excite a certain warmth of emotion, but in none of them do I find



these words, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' " 24 That was the utterance of a Christian heart which had experienced for itself the power of Christ.

IX. We come now to the first branch of the practical evidence, namely, that which is derived from the spread and transforming power of Christianity in the world. It remains for us to examine this, and the relation in which the evidence of Christian experience stands to it. There is a sense in which this itself may be regarded as an evidence from experience, since it has to do with the actual working of Christianity as a system of redemptive powers. But it is concerned not with the inward but with the outward effects of these redemptive agencies, and therefore we are right in treating it separately.

Our Saviour described the kingdom of God as like the leaven which is hidden in the meal and leavens the whole; or like the seed which grows up through the stages of blade and ear to the full corn in the ear (Matt. xiii. 33; Mark iv. 28). The truth he uttered as a prophecy furnishes in its fulfilment—so far as the world has gone in fulfilling it—a very powerful and convincing argument for the truth of Christianity.

Let us look at the argument in its main outlines. From the feeble beginnings of the Christian church, at the time it received the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, its progress has been straight forward. Before the death of the apostles it had gained a foothold in every important part of the Roman Empire, especially in the great cities. By the beginning of the fourth century its period of persecution came to an end, and it conquered the proud



Empire itself, coming into possession of the imperial power in the person of Constantine. From that time to this its numbers have steadily increased, no century failing to mark an advance except the thirteenth, when the failure of the Crusades gave over a large Christian territory to the Mohammedans. At present a third of the population of the globe is Christian, and the work of increase is going steadily forward.<sup>25</sup>

During the earlier centuries this advance was made in the teeth of the most bitter opposition. Christianity in itself was repugnant to the feelings and beliefs of the ancient heathen world. Its requirements were hard and exacting. It set up a claim of independence which brought it into inevitable antagonism to the civil government. Its disciples were subjected to a systematic oppression and persecution the like of which the world never saw. The means which it employed were not those of force but purely spiritual. Mohammedanism, its most powerful modern rival, pushed its conquering way by the sword. Christianity, at least in the earlier centuries, availed itself of no such means. When a vessel advances against current, tide, and wind, the conclusion is that it is propelled by an inward power. We judge the same of Christianity. We can account for the progress of Christianity, against obstacles and without outward aids, only upon the assumption that a divine power was working within.

But Christianity has not only increased numerically ; it has also wrought the greatest moral and spiritual changes. It has transformed religion, giving the world in the place of the heathen systems, with their absurdities and falsehoods and immoralities, the pure faith of Christ, which, even though it were a fable, would be



the most beautiful and inspiring fable the world has ever known. It has given a new civilization to a third of the world. Under its influence society has assumed a new form. The rights of personality have become recognized. Constitutional government has been established. Jurisprudence has been reformed. Class distinctions have been broken down. Slavery has been abolished. The brotherhood of nations is beginning to be recognized. Charitable institutions have been established. The position of woman has been elevated. The rights of children have been recognized. The Christian home has been evolved. Commerce and trade have been placed upon a new and ethically higher basis. Literature, science, philosophy, art, have sprung into a grander life. In a word, our many-sided modern civilization, with its immense superiority over that of the heathen and of ancient times, is the effect of Christianity.

To-day Christianity is the power which is moulding the destinies of the world. The Christian nations are in the ascendant. Just in proportion to the purity of Christianity as it exists in the various nations of Christendom is the influence they are exerting upon the world's destiny. The future of the world seems to be in the hands of the three great Protestant powers—England, Germany, and the United States. The old promise is being fulfilled; the followers of the true God are inheriting the world.

In a hasty sketch like this it is not needful to present the seamy side of the picture. But I have not forgotten it. My opinion is that the impression made by the facts I have hinted at would be increased rather than diminished by a fair statement of all the facts



which make for the other side. Looking at the matter in the large, we can have no question that Christianity has been from the first certain of its universal conquest. No other religion can vie with it. There is no likelihood that any religion will ever appear to enter into rivalry with it. The modern attempts to provide a substitute for Christianity are ludicrously inadequate. Japan, in spite of all love for its ancient religions and all openness of mind to receive our western infidelity, is surely and steadily drifting into the acceptance of Christianity ; or, I might more truly say, is being carried toward that acceptance by the operation of an inevitable power.

Now these facts form a powerful argument. Here is Christianity on trial, vindicating its truth by its fruits. The facts are manifest. The unbeliever sees them as truly as the Christian. Deny them he cannot. To explain them in any other way than upon the assumption that Christianity is divine, is, to say the least, a difficult matter, with regard to which unbelievers are at cross-purposes among themselves. Triumphant Christianity carries its evidence on its face.

I do not doubt that this argument has its independent force. Like the other historical and rational proofs, it also is in a sense presupposed by the evidence of Christian experience. Nevertheless, its full power can be realized only by one who brings to its understanding the evidence of the inward life. As the individual man is a microcosm, so the individual Christian is a mirror in which the causal agency and progress of Christianity are reflected in miniature. The seed of the divine life, implanted in the heart, in its growth to the perfect flower of Christian manhood is a reca-



pitulation of the growth of Christianity in the world. Just as the development of the embryo is an abridged history of the evolution of the species, so it is here. The Christian who has had the divine life working in himself has the key to the working of the same divine power in the world.<sup>26</sup> He recognizes the supernatural leaven at work. The realities of the kingdom are the facts of his inner life, and they are the hidden but potent realities of this external process. Because the kingdom of God is within him, he knows how rightly to interpret the movement of the kingdom of God without. Accordingly, the true Christian is an optimist. He does not and cannot doubt the success of Christianity. The power that is working in the world, is to him no blind, unconscious power; it is the Christ himself, doing his Father's work through the Holy Spirit. He knows from what he has himself experienced that the agencies which are working for us are greater than those which are arrayed against us.

There is one more practical argument, which I leave untouched. It is that derived from the outward working of Christianity in the individual. Of its transcendent importance I am not forgetful. But it is so closely related to the evidence of Christian experience, that to attempt to show the relation of the two is needless.

We are thus brought to the conclusion of this examination of the relation of the evidence from experience to the other evidences of Christianity. What I have tried to show is that the experimental evidence is the most important and fundamental of all the proofs, the real centre and ruling principle of the organism of evidences. I have not asserted that it



necessarily comes first in time, though in many cases there is no thought of evidences until the Christian life has been already entered. There is a true sense, which I have tried duly to set forth, in which the external evidences, historical, rational, and practical, lead up to the experimental, which is their crown and consummation. But the real power and value of the evidences depend upon the evidence of experience.

So we come to the conclusion of this course of lectures. In taking leave of you let me say a few words by way of practical application.

In presenting the subject which we have discussed I have not been unmindful of the scientific aspects of Christian apologetics. I believe that science has a most important relation to life. Clear and orderly thought is the necessary precondition of all effective action. My aim has been to show that the evidence of experience has the highest scientific value, and that if apologetics is to take its place as a science among the sciences, full justice must be done to this, its fundamental form.

But my purpose has been practical as well as scientific, and practical because scientific. Theologians have wavered as to the theological rubric under which apologetics should be classified.<sup>27</sup> Some have assigned it to fundamental theology, some to systematic theology, some to practical theology. For my own part, I am not sure that it belongs wholly to any of these three departments. The system of the theological disciplines is an organism, and, like all organisms, incapable of that sharp separation and distinction which our logic is too often inclined to demand of it. At all events,



while consenting on the whole to the classification which places apologetics in fundamental theology, I am sure that it has a practical side.

It is this side which has been uppermost in my mind in all the discussions—many of them perhaps too abstract and philosophical—through which we have passed. My hope has been, not so much that I might make some worthy contribution to theological science, though I trust I have not fallen entirely short in that respect. Rather I have been thinking chiefly of you young men, who are so soon to enter upon the work of the Christian ministry, and have hoped that I might in some degree meet your needs, which, though not unconcerned with science, will be practical rather than scientific.

The generation in which you are to do your best labor is to be in many respects different from that to which we belong who are now bearing the burden and heat of the day. The last thirty years have been a time of struggle and difficulty in the church of Christ. Many influences have conspired to hinder the progress of the Master's kingdom. Though the church has increased in numbers and in strength, yet the opposition to Christianity has more than kept pace with the church's growth. The vast advance in the physical sciences and in all material things, which our age has witnessed, has been fruitful in the production of unbelief. There have been times when it has seemed as if Christianity were losing ground.

But, thank God, the tide has turned. The movement is now in the opposite direction. The fight has been a gallant one. An apologetical literature of enormous dimensions shows how earnest, and on the



whole successful, has been the defence of the great truths of theism and Christianity. You are tired of hearing about the "conflict between science and religion;" but we of the older generation know that while true science and religion never come into conflict, a warfare has been going on between scientific unbelievers and Christians than which the world has not seen a fiercer since the days of English deism and German rationalism. But, as I said, thank God, the fight is about over—at least so far as the main action is concerned—and the victory is on the side of him who in every age of his church leads the Christian hosts to battle and gives them the mastery over his and their foes. The signs of the times are on the side of triumphant Christianity. But we who have been in the fight have not escaped without wounds. We have had trials to our faith which are not known in more peaceful times. Some of us know what it is to have had the battle fought out on the field of our own souls, where our very heart's-blood has been spilt.

Well, I believe a better time is coming for you. I hope and believe you are about to enter into the peaceful inheritance of the generation of religious struggle through which the church has been passing. But you must not look for complete freedom from conflict. There is no discharge in this war, except that which comes when the warrior passes from the church militant to the church triumphant. The Saviour came not to send peace but a sword (Matt. x. 34). You will still have the old foes to confront, though they will appear in new guise. How are you going to meet the assaults which will be made upon Christianity in your day? First of all, you will have your own faith



to keep untarnished. Then you will have to strengthen in the faith the Christian people who are committed to your charge. You must guide the children of the church into the truth. Doubters will come to you for help. The opponents of Christianity will level their weapons against you and try the temper of your armor. How are you going to do the work which will thus be required of you?

From the nature of the case the minister's work must be largely apologetical. Unless he can content himself to preach a Gospel of authority, he must defend the truth. He is set for its defence. He will thus maintain the truth in the pulpit. The most successful preachers in all ages have been those through whose presentation of the Gospel has run a thread of constant defence. This was the case with our Lord himself. If you examine his discourses as they are recorded in the Gospel of St. John, you will be struck with the extent to which he put himself upon the level of his disciples and his adversaries, and argued the truth with them. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, never forgot that he was set for the maintenance and defence of the faith. His epistles to the Romans and the Galatians are apologetical throughout, especially in defence of the great doctrines of grace. It would be an interesting task, if the time and opportunity were given me, to examine the evidences by which the scriptural authors defend the Christian system. You would be surprised—if your attention has never been called to it before—to find to what an extent it is possible to draw from the Bible a system of apologetics which will stand the test even of modern times. For, as I said a moment ago, the old foes of Christianity are still



at work, and the modern enemies of our faith are new only in their dress. If you will succeed, you must in your preaching keep in mind the fact that you have to defend the truth, and so to commend it to the hearers God has given you.

So in your pastoral work. If you are to be good pastors, who will not feel your duty done when you have made your yearly round of pastoral visits, pastors upon whose souls the eternal welfare of your people is a sacred charge, you will find weak faith to be strengthened, unintelligent faith to be enlightened, seekers after truth to be brought to faith, perplexed and wandering souls to be led into the truth, enemies of the truth to be confuted. It may be that in your own souls doubts will arise which you will need to meet with a defence to yourself of the truths which you preach to others.

Now much will depend upon your system of defence. Just as no minister can preach the Gospel successfully without a theology, no minister can do his work as a defender of Christianity without a system of apologetics. It may be in a book, it may not. That is a matter of minor importance. I do not think the best systems of divinity are in books, though as a teacher of theology I have a high estimate of the published systems. So you may never put your system of evidence into written form, and you may never find a treatise which will give you just what you need. But you must *have* a system, if you will do the work God has given you to do; and the question is, Shall it be a good system, or an imperfect and inadequate one?

If the man of God is to be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. iii. 17), he will not be satisfied with guerrilla warfare in the defence of



Christianity. He will need to be able to give the reason for the faith that is in him wisely and intelligently, so that he may convince and convert souls, and build them up in Christlike living. Like the good physician, he must be so grounded in the principles of his art that he will know how to prescribe in every case the right treatment and medicine. You cannot afford to enter the ministry unsettled upon this subject. If you do, you will make Christianity ridiculous and foster the prejudice that it rests not upon reason but upon mere imagination. Alas, how many ministers there are who do more harm to Christianity by their defence of it than many of its enemies do by their open assaults !

It has been my hope throughout these lectures that I might be of some aid to you in forming your apologetical system. It seems to me that we are at this time in great need of reconstruction in this department of theological science. What we need to ask ourselves is, What is the great fundamental evidence upon which our Christian faith rests, and how can this be so brought into relation to the other evidences that they may be most effective in strengthening faith and overthrowing unbelief ?

The answer to this question I have tried to give. The basal evidence of Christianity must be that which is common to all Christians, and which even the Christian who has made the greatest advance in theological and philosophical scholarship primarily relies upon. It is useless to say that the evidence which satisfies ourselves is not the evidence we are to use when we confront the assaults of the adversary, or meet the difficulties and questionings of the seeker after truth. The alternative is simple, and we must accept one side



or the other : either the inward certainty of the Christian, the certainty which makes him ready, if need be, to suffer death rather than give up his Christian belief, is rational, or it is irrational ; either it carries evidence with it or it does not. If it does not, if it is merely an irrational conviction, founded upon no basis of reason, as the unbeliever declares, then let us have done with it ; the sooner we relinquish it, the better. As reasonable men we cannot afford to found our faith upon irrational convictions. But if the certainty of the Christian has a foundation that satisfies the profoundest cravings of his reason, if it involves a proof compared with which all other proofs are weak, then let him have the courage of his convictions, and let him vindicate the scientific value of this evidence by putting it to the forefront.

I know what the chief objection is, and have already tried to meet it. It is said that the proof which is satisfactory to us is not satisfactory to the opponents of Christianity. But this objection has no real weight. As a matter of fact, no proof is satisfactory to the opponents of Christianity. Do we think that we convince them with our external proofs, historical, rational, and practical ? If so, let us open our eyes and abandon the fond delusion. They have an answer, to them satisfactory, to all our evidences, and they regard us as weak and prejudiced. How many men, think you, who in their hearts were set against Christian truth, were ever converted by the old evidence from miracles and prophecy ? None. The truth is, there is a moral difficulty in the way of the acceptance of Christianity by its opponents. They *will* not come unto Christ that they might have life (John v. 40).



They approach the subject with a prejudice which mere argument cannot overcome.<sup>28</sup>

But how shall we deal best with them—by giving them the objective evidence, when they challenge us for our proof, or by giving them the true proof upon which our certainty as Christians rests, the evidence of experience? Which method will be most likely to gain their respect? Which to lead them to make that surrender of their will which is the great end of all Christian defence and persuasion? What these men want to know, so far as they are honest in their requirement, is what is the ground upon which *we* accept Christianity. We are much more likely to help them by perfect honesty than by a partial reserve. We need to make them see that our faith in its deepest roots is, to us at least, a rational faith. Such a faith is contagious. We may thus bring them to God. If, on the other hand, the objectors are not honest, still let them know the truth, and let them understand that so long as they refuse to follow the method which Christ has prescribed for the trial of Christianity, they are doing a wrong to their own souls.

If this be true with respect to the opponents of Christianity, much more with respect to the earnest inquirer after truth, and the young who are already under Christian instruction. We need to take them into our confidence, to let them know the real and inmost grounds of our faith. Let us follow the method of nature in the Christian sphere. Ninety-nine out of every hundred of those who become Christians are brought to the Saviour by the example and influence of other Christians. What happens thus, without intent on our part, by a law of man's religious being, is a safe



rule for our intentional and deliberate efforts. There is an argument in every case, only it is hidden and not recognized. Let us lift the natural logic of common Christian life into an avowed principle of proof. The unrecognized evidence is that of Christian experience, exerting its power not only upon the individual to whom it primarily belongs, but also upon others within the reach of his influence. The same method holds good, only in a higher degree, in our efforts to strengthen the faith of weak Christians. When we show them the evidential value of the life within, and thus convince them of the rationality of their belief, we are enabled to save them from anxiety and sorrow, if not from spiritual shipwreck.

If we put the evidence of Christian experience thus to the front, the other evidences, as we have seen in the last two lectures, fall readily into place and give their strong confirmation to the inward proof.

Perhaps I am an enthusiast in this matter. But I cannot help thinking and believing that when Christian teachers and ministers come more fully to recognize the essential and central value of the experimental evidence of Christianity, the kingdom of God will move forward in its triumphant course with a speed and success such as the world has not witnessed for many a year. That this may be the case is my hope. That, whatever be the means, the kingdom will advance, I know. If in some small measure these lectures, which I have prepared and delivered with so much delight, shall aid in the great work of the kingdom, I shall feel that my labor has not been in vain.







# APPENDIX.

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## NOTES TO LECTURE I.

### NOTE 1, PAGE 6.

On the subject of deism, see Leland's *View of the Principal Deistical Writers*; Lechler's *Geschichte des englischen Deismus*; Stephen's *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*; Hunt's *Religious Thought in England*; Farrar's *Critical History of Free Thought*; and Pfleiderer's *Religionsphilosophie*, 2d ed., vol. i., pp. 108-132.

Deism was only one of the manifestations of the great intellectual movement of the period, a period which was emphatically the age of reason. In religion, in philosophy, in literature, in politics, in science, we meet with the same spirit. Its influence was felt alike in the orthodoxy and the infidelity of the times. In its earliest and best stage it appears in the writings of such rational theologians as Hooker, Chillingworth, Taylor, and the Cambridge Platonists, Whichcote, Smith, Cudworth, Norris, and More. To these men reason meant those higher functions of the intellect which man shares with God. Its infidel representative is Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who, though he is commonly called a deist, and rejected the distinctively Christian doctrines, yet by his earnestness of purpose and spiritual depth differs widely from the later opponents of revealed religion. In the more advanced stage of the movement reason had come to be synonymous with the understanding or common-sense. The aim alike of the defenders and the foes of Christianity seemed to be to bring religion down to the level of a reason which finds its horizon in the five senses.

The philosopher of this age was John Locke. Its poetical evangel was Pope's *Essay on Man* (cf. Farrar's *Critical History of*



Free Thought, pp. 22, 23). The fact that Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity was regarded by orthodox men as a satisfactory exposition of the Christian faith speaks volumes concerning the tone of the prevailing orthodoxy. The fact that Bishop Warburton could appear as the champion of the *Essay on Man* is a no less notable indication of the state of the religious mind. The great bugbear of the period was "enthusiasm." Locke subjects it to calm philosophical contempt in a famous chapter in the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (Bk. iv., ch. 19). Swift holds it up to bitter ridicule in his account of the "Æolists" in the *Tale of a Tub* (section viii.). Yet by enthusiasm most men at this time meant what we now call spiritual Christianity. Hunt says (*Religious Thought in England*, vol. iii., p. 397), and probably with truth, "that the Spirit of God had virtually departed from the world, was a doctrine universally received both by Churchmen and Dissenters."

Leland says (*Deistical Writers*, London, 1798, vol. i., p. 2): "That which properly characterizes these deists is, that they reject all revealed religion, and discard all pretences to it, as owing to imposture or enthusiasm. In this they all agree, and in professing a regard for natural religion, though they are far from being agreed in their notions of it." Lord Herbert directed his attack against the contents of the Christian revelation, reducing religion to five doctrines, namely, the existence of God, the duty of worshipping him, the obligation of piety and virtue, the pardon of sins on the ground of repentance, and rewards and punishments in a future state (cf. his *De Religione Gentilium*). Shaftesbury, without directly assailing Christianity, undermined its influence by the aid of raillery and ridicule. Toland, commonly reckoned a deist, but not essentially different in tone and spirit from Locke, whose disciple he professed to be, undertook in his *Christianity not Mysterious*, to show that the Scriptures contain no doctrines not level with the common understanding of men. Tindal worked in the same line, taking for his thesis the assertion that Christianity is as old as the creation, and the Gospel a republication of the religion of nature. In the "*Deist's Bible*," as Tindal's book was called, religion is reduced to its lowest terms; in a word, it becomes pure natural religion.

But the attack was not confined to the supernatural contents of Christianity. A vigorous assault was directed, especially during the latter part of the period of deism, against its historical de-



fences. Blount, Morgan, and Chubb opened their batteries against the scriptural history and its evidences. Collins assailed the argument from prophecy. Woolston, Annet, and Hume made a vigorous, and at first apparently successful, onslaught upon the miracles.

Deism reached its climax—and, we might almost say, its *reductio ad absurdum*—in Bolingbroke and Hume. Bolingbroke—the man whom that “good hater” Dr. Johnson called “a scoundrel and a coward”—represented the worst features of deism, its lack of moral earnestness, its cynicism, its artificiality, its tendency to duplicity, its superficial scholarship. Yet the movement is summed up in him as in no other man. All the deistical arguments are stated by him with clearness and force, especially the historical. In his confinement of the divine government to the general laws imposed upon nature at the creation, and his consequent denial of miracles, revelation, and special providence, we see at its height the philosophical tendency characteristic of deism. Hume’s importance in the movement depends not so much upon his Essay on Miracles as upon his sceptical philosophy, which, calling in question, as it did, the fundamental principles alike of religion, metaphysics, and morals, was the logical outcome of the revolt of the human understanding against the limits which God has imposed upon it. As Pfleiderer has truly said (*Religionsphilosophie*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 126), Hume stands in the same relation to the rationalistic movement in England as Kant to that in Germany. If the result was different in the two cases, it was because other and deeper influences were at work—predominantly spiritual in England, intellectual in Germany.

#### NOTE 2, PAGE 6.

The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature, published in 1736.

#### NOTE 3, PAGE 6.

A View of the Evidences of Christianity, published in 1794.

#### NOTE 4, PAGE 7.

Paley’s Evidences, Pt. I., Prop. 1.

#### NOTE 5, PAGE 9.

Faust, Erster Theil.



## NOTE 6, PAGE 11.

The first *Leben Jesu* was published at Tübingen in 1835.

## NOTE 7, PAGE 11.

Die sogenannten Pastoralbriefe des Apostels Paulus, 1835. Paulus der Apostel Jesu Christi, 1845. Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien, 1847.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 15.

See the *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, London, 1888, vol. i., pp. 307-309. Cf. *ib.*, vol. i., p. 47, where Darwin speaks of the delight he took in Paley's *Evidences*, when he studied that work at Cambridge. Cf. also the *Presbyterian Review*, vol. ix., p. 569 seq.: Charles Darwin's Religious Life, by Professor B. B. Warfield, D.D.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 16.

*The Limits of Religious Thought*, Bampton Lectures, 1858.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 16.

*Notes on Reid*, 1846. *Discussions in Philosophy, Literature, etc.*, New York, 1853. *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*, edited by Mansel and Veitch, 1859-1861.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 16.

*First Principles of a System of Philosophy*, 1862. Amer., 2d ed., 1872.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 29.

In the early church the evidences are treated with a breadth and vigor of thought and a freshness of conception characteristic of the theology of the age, before the facts and truths of Christianity had lost their living reality and been exchanged for dogmas. On every side Christianity was attacked, by Jews and heathen, with the weapons of persecution, ridicule, theology, and philosophy. The early apologists, such as the unknown author of the *Epistle to Diognetus*, Justin Martyr, Minutius Felix, Tertullian, and Origen, avail themselves of almost all the resources of apologetics to repel the assaults of their opponents and to set forth the divine truth of Christianity. Among the historical proofs those from prophecy and miracles were especially urged. The connection between Christianity and Judaism was brought forward to disprove the charge that the former was a new religion.



Augustin, in that wonderful apologetical treatise *The City of God*, vindicated the truth of Christianity and its right of existence in opposition to heathenism by an elaborate and comprehensive historical argument. The rational evidence was also exhibited with great force and success. To show that all the scattered truth in the heathen religions and philosophies was really an anticipation of Christianity, Justin proclaimed his doctrine of the *Logos spermatikos*, the pre-existent Christ, who, as the true Light that lighteth every man, was in the hearts even of the heathen as a seed of divine teaching, preparing the way for the Gospel of redemption. Later writers took up the same thought, men like Clement of Alexandria showing that Christianity is the true philosophy.

The contents of the Christian revelation were also exhibited and vindicated. The earlier apologists expounded those great truths which Christianity maintains in common with natural religion—the unity of God, the creation of the world, the divine providence, the moral law, the freedom and responsibility of man, the rewards and punishments of the future life. Afterward the distinctively Christian doctrines were set forth and defended by men like Origen and Athanasius. The incarnation of Christ, his life and death, his redemptive work, and the Gospel of forgiveness and salvation through him, were urged in evidence of the truth of Christianity. Nor was the first branch of the practical argument neglected. In answer to the attacks made upon the character of the Christians as citizens and the morality of their lives, the early defenders of the faith pointed triumphantly to the effects of the Gospel upon its professors. Said the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus* (ch. v.), speaking of the Christians, “They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all.” This was the undeniable evidence for the truth of the Christian claims. Cf. *Der Beweis des Glaubens*, vols. i. and ii.: *Die apologetische Thätigkeit der alten Kirche*, by Burk.

There is no reason to doubt that during these first ages Christianity was practically recognized as a living power in the hearts of believers. The Christianity of the martyrs and confessors was not a matter of doctrine or opinion, but of life, of personal communion with God through Christ. The lofty spiritual piety of such a book as Augustin’s *Confessions* shows how real was the understanding of the highest and most essential element in Chris-



tianity even when the church was passing into its mediæval stage. It is one thing, however, to hold to the spiritual realities in the practical Christian life, and quite another to make use of them in theology and in the scientific statement of Christian evidence. Very early in this period there begin to be indications of the tendency to regard Christianity rather as a revelation than as a life, and to understand by revelation mainly a system of doctrine. Undoubtedly this tendency was fostered by the prevalent view of Christianity as a philosophy, but it was also connected with the great wave of doctrinal controversy which swept over the church, and the externalizing of Christianity in government and worship, which prepared the way for the mediæval system. Faith was represented not as a personal trust in a living Saviour, but as an assent to a system of doctrine in which the activity of the will was only the instrument for the acceptance by the intellect. According to Augustin, faith is submission to the teachings of divine revelation as vouched for by the church and the Scriptures. "To believe," he says, "is nothing else than to think with assent." (*De Prædestinatione Sanctorum*, 5: "*Ipsum credere nihil aliud quam cum assensione cogitare.*") It is this kind of faith that is meant in Augustin's famous saying, "*Fides præcedit intellectum*;" the thinking with assent is to be followed by an intellectual appropriation of the contents of faith. In the Eastern Church religion became synonymous with the acceptance of orthodox doctrine. In the Western, if the same extreme was not reached, still the tendency was to intellectualize faith.

It is, therefore, not strange that we look in vain through the writings of the first great apologetical age of the church to find any satisfactory presentation of the evidence of Christian experience.

#### NOTE 13, PAGE 29.

During the Middle Ages the apologetical interest falls into the background. The great opponents of Christianity have been overcome. A few works, it is true, were directed against the Jews and the Mohammedans. Of these the most noted was the *Summa Catholicæ Fidei contra Gentiles* of Thomas Aquinas. But we need not look exclusively to the avowed apologies of Christianity to discover the mediæval system of apologetics. That system was elaborated in the discussions of the scholastic theologians respecting the relations of faith and philosophy, revelation



and reason. It attained its full development in the writings of Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas.

The distinction is made between truth discoverable by reason, and truth discoverable only by divine revelation. Revelation is regarded as doctrine, as the communication of truth undiscoverable by reason. The mediæval theology does not identify revelation and Scripture. The revelation existed before the Scripture. Scripture and tradition are the sources of our knowledge of revelation. We are to receive them as true upon the authority of the church, the pillar and ground of the truth, which in all ages has stood in vital connection with Christ and the Holy Spirit through the hierarchy, administering at once the divine grace and the divine truth. But while the church thus vouches for the truth of Scripture and tradition, through which we learn what the revelation was, the church owes its authority to the revelation, which is the ultimate ground of Christianity. The reality and divinity of this revelation are proved by outward criteria, such as miracles and prophecy, and by inward criteria, such as the person of Christ and the reasonableness of the doctrine.

These criteria, or evidences of reason, prove only the form of the Christian revelation but not its contents. If what has been said with respect to the inward criterion of the reasonableness of the doctrine would seem to prove the contrary, the appearance is fallacious. All that is meant is that the doctrines contain nothing contrary to reason, that they do not conflict among themselves, and that they can to a certain extent be illustrated by rational analogies. The infallible church is the only authorized interpreter of revelation. The inquirer may convince himself upon grounds of reason that the revelation is divine, but the church alone can unfold to him the matter of the revelation. Where reason ends, faith begins. Faith is assent to the truth of revelation as expounded by the infallible church. So far as it is a submission of the soul to this divine truth as interpreted by the church, it is an act of will. So far as it is the apprehension of the truth, it is an act of the intellect. Viewed on the divine side, it is a work of grace wrought in the soul by God. It need not be an explicit faith which comprehends the truths accepted. Sufficient if it be an implicit faith that receives the doctrines of revelation in the mass, and leaves to the infallible church the task of interpreting them.

According to the mediæval theory Christianity includes two elements—the original revelation and the living church standing in



vital connection with Christ, permeated by the Holy Spirit, administering the divine grace through its hierarchy and sacraments. But practically, since the church is the infallible custodian and interpreter of the revelation, the latter is swallowed up by the former, and the church and Christianity are identical.

Of course this system gives no prominence to the evidence of Christian experience. Yet that it does not utterly exclude it, is shown by the fact that it recognizes the faith of the Christian as a *fides divina* wrought by God himself. In the principle of Anselm, taken, as we have seen, from Augustin—*fides præcedit intellectum*—more was meant than a mere assent; it was an assent involving experience. Anselm says (*De Fide Trinitatis*, c. 2), “*Qui non crediderit, non intelliget. Nam qui non crediderit, non experietur; et qui expertus non fuerit, non intelliget.*” The fervid piety of which we have abundant illustration in the *Acta Sanctorum* and the writings of the mystical theologians shows that the evidence of experience was operative as a practical principle, if not as a regularly recognized part of the apologetical system.

#### NOTE 14, PAGE 29.

It is only when we come to Protestantism that we find an adequate conception of the nature of Christianity, and a willingness to give a place in theology and the evidences of Christianity to the personal experience of the Christian. The Reformation cut loose from the authority of the church and planted itself upon the Bible. If the Roman Catholics set the church above the Bible, the Reformers set the Bible above the church. To them the inspired Word of God was the one authority, the sole rule of faith and practice. The Reformers, however, were far from identifying the Bible with Christianity, or confining Christianity to the revelation of which the Bible is the record. It was to them the medium—along with the sacraments—through which the redemptive power of God comes to the human heart in every age. It was the great means of grace—a term which had not then, as now, become trite, but carried its full meaning upon its face. As the Roman Church claimed to be the living medium of the divine grace, the Protestants claimed that the Bible is such a medium. Upon this point Lutherans and Reformed were united, differing only in that the former confined the operations of the Holy Spirit in grace exclusively to the Word and the sacraments, while



the latter gave them a wider scope, though still making the Word and the sacraments the ordinary means of grace. But in the first age of Protestantism all recognized Christianity as consisting not only in a revelation made long ago, but also in the present power of God by which the facts and truths thus revealed are brought to bear upon the hearts of men. To Luther and Calvin the Bible is not a dead letter, but the Word of God which is "quick and powerful," because it is the instrument in the hands of the present Spirit.

At first the only foes of Protestantism were the Roman Catholics; there were no infidels. Hence the apologetical activity of the Reformers was directed chiefly against the old Church. The great question to be answered was, How shall we prove the Bible to be true, if there is no infallible church to vouch for it with its living voice of God?

The question did not mean precisely what it would in our times, when the distinction between the Bible and the revelation of which it is a record is for the most part clearly made. The Reformers took from the Roman Catholics the rationalistic view of revelation as a system of doctrinal truth. The Catholics, as we have seen, did not identify the revelation and the Bible; the supreme place they gave to the church, and the subordinate place they accorded to the Bible, prevented them from doing so. The Protestants, however, in subordinating the church and raising the Bible to the place of authority, failed clearly to distinguish the revelation from its record. These two imperfections of the Protestant system, the conception of revelation as a system of doctrine, and the identification of revelation and the Bible, were destined to bring about disastrous consequences. At the time of which I am speaking, their evil tendency was not perceived. The question before the Reformers was, How shall we show that the Bible—that is, the Christian revelation understood as the true doctrine of the Gospel—is divine?

In answering this question the Protestants did not fall back solely upon the historical and rational evidences. They accepted these evidences as they received them ready-made from the Catholic Church. Calvin mentions all the proofs of these classes in his Institutes, and admits their importance. But these evidences, the Reformers declared, since they rest merely upon the discoveries of human reason, can at the most give only a moral certainty, that is, a high degree of probability. They do not give



that divine and infallible certainty which the Christian needs, in order that his own soul may be satisfied, and that he may have a sufficient answer to give to the gainsayer. They produce only a human faith, not that divine faith which makes wise unto salvation. The certain persuasion of the divine truth of the Scriptures "must be sought," Calvin says, "from a higher source than human reasons, or judgments, or conjectures" (Institutes, Bk. i., ch. vii., sect. 4).

What is this higher source? The early Protestants answered, God himself. We receive the Scriptures as true, because God is their author and speaks to us in and through them. We know that they are the Word of God because the same Spirit who inspired their writers and speaks to us through their pages witnesses in our souls to their truth. The appeal is to the inward witness of the Spirit, the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*. The unregenerate man does not possess this witness. His reason is darkened, so that he cannot discern the divine power that is at work in the Scriptures. In the regenerate soul this darkness is removed by the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, so that it recognizes the presence of the Spirit in the Word, and knows it to be true and divine. Thus God himself vouches for the truth of the Scriptures.

Here, then, the evidence of Christian experience, which from the first had been contained implicitly in the Christian system, comes clearly into view. It is not yet, however, stated in its completeness, or with a distinct recognition of its far-reaching character. The inward witness of the Spirit is valid evidence so far as it goes. It turns from the outward proofs, which can give only probability, to the experience of the regenerate soul. The particular element in that experience which it emphasizes is undoubtedly real. Every Christian has a conviction that is indubitable, of the truth and divine authority of the Gospel and the Book which records it. And every Christian ascribes this conviction to the Holy Spirit.

But still the bottom of the matter is not reached. This is but a part of the evidence of Christian experience. The divine faith, the spiritual illumination, through which the Christian is convinced of the truth and divinity of the scriptural system, needs a deeper grounding. The question arises, How do we know that this is the work of the Spirit? And this inevitably raises the further questions, How do we know that the Holy Spirit acts



upon our souls at all? How do we know that Christianity is a present divine power?

But these were not the questions the Reformers were trying to answer. They had in view only the immediate need, the proof required in their controversy with the Roman Catholics. It was enough for them to answer the question, how we know the Bible to be divine. And yet the answer to the deeper questions lay near at hand. The Reformers and the Protestant theologians who followed them all held the doctrine of Christian assurance, basing it upon the inward work of grace and the witness of the Spirit to the believer's sonship. "This certainty," says the Westminster Confession (ch. xviii., sect. 2), which states the doctrine in its typical form, "is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God; which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption."

Here, then, is the deeper element in Christian experience, the larger work of grace, of which the believer's faith or spiritual illumination is a part, and the witness of the Spirit to the reality of this work of grace which underlies the Spirit's witness to the truth of the Gospel, or of the Book which records it. In other words, the evidence of the reality and truth of Christianity has for its root the evidence that the believer is a child of God. That the early Protestants did not clearly discern the connection between the two elements in the Christian's experience, was what was to be expected under the circumstances. Yet it would not be impossible to find passages in their writings which betray at least a tacit consciousness that the witness of the Spirit to the believer's adoption and the witness to the divinity and truth of the Scriptures are at the root one, parts of that one powerful influence of the Spirit upon the believer's soul which is the great present proof of the reality of Christianity.

NOTE 15, PAGE 29.

See Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, Bk. i., ch. vii.-ix., in which the reformer gives his system of apologetics. The caption of ch. vii. is: "The testimony of the Spirit neces-



sary to confirm the Scripture, in order to the complete establishment of its authority. The suspension of its authority on the judgment of the church, an impious fiction." Ch. viii. gives the "Rational proofs to establish the belief of the Scripture." Here all the common external arguments are stated. The title of ch. ix. is: "The fanaticism which discards the Scripture, under the pretence of resorting to immediate revelations, subversive of every principle of piety." Here he guards against the wrong use of the argument from experience. The "higher source," of which mention is made in the previous note, is, according to Calvin, "the secret testimony of the Spirit" (ch. vii., sect. 4). In the same connection he says: "As God alone is a sufficient witness of himself in his own word, so also the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit. It is necessary, therefore, that the same Spirit who spake by the mouth of the prophets should penetrate into our hearts, to convince us that they faithfully delivered the oracles which were divinely intrusted to them." This persuasion, he says (*ibid.*, sect. 5), is such "as requires no reasons; such a knowledge as is supported by the highest reason, in which, indeed, the mind rests with greater security and constancy than in any reasons; it is, finally, such a sentiment as cannot be produced but by a revelation from heaven. I speak of nothing but what every believer experiences in his heart, except that my language falls far short of a just explication of the subject."

#### NOTE 16, PAGE 30.

Ch. i., sect. 5: "We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent esteem for the Holy Scripture; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." To which may be added what is said of the interpretation of the Scripture (ch. i., sect. 6): "We acknowledge the inward illumination of



the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word."

## NOTE 17, PAGE 30.

Baxter was one of those remarkable men who live at the turning-points of human history, and in their experience and teaching unite the best results of the manifold intellectual and spiritual movements of their times. His active life was passed during the stirring scenes of the English Civil War and the generation that followed. His sympathies were with all that was best in the Reformation and Puritan theology. But he had felt the power of that great tide of rational thought which had begun to flow early in the seventeenth century. In philosophy the works of Bacon, Hobbes, and Descartes were agitating men's minds with a host of new ideas. Physical science was just beginning its wonderful career of modern progress. In church and state the old structures had been torn down and men were building anew with all the enthusiasm of a new era. As yet free thought had not generally run into rationalism and deism. There was just enough of opposition to Christianity to make the Christian theologian stir himself in its defence. On the other hand, the appearance of Quakerism, and kindred forms of what seemed to be unchristian enthusiasm, acted as a warning against an undue use of the subjective element in Christianity.

These influences combined with the strong natural parts and earnest spiritual piety of Baxter to render him one of the deepest, most vigorous, and most tolerant theological thinkers of his century, giving his writings a value to-day which belongs to those of none of his contemporaries. He was thus fitted, as few theologians have been, to deal with the evidences of Christianity.

Baxter's biographer, Orme (Works, 1830, vol. i., p. 440), says that he was the first original English writer on apologetics. Certainly no one had previously undertaken the task with any scientific thoroughness. The Protestant churches of the Continent had, it is true, furnished a few eminent apologists, of whom the most important was Hugo Grotius. But their influence seems to have been little felt in Great Britain, and to Baxter undoubtedly belongs the credit of having laid the foundations of this science in the land where it was to win some of its most brilliant triumphs.



But Baxter's merit lies not so much in the fact that he is the father of English apologetical science, as in that he did the work so thoroughly and comprehensively, laying the foundations so broad and deep. In a series of treatises on the evidences, extending over twenty-one years, the Puritan theologian wrought out the new science, gathering strength as he proceeded. His two most important works upon this subject are *The Unreasonableness of Infidelity*, and *The Reasons of the Christian Religion*, the latter treating of natural theology as well as of the evidences of Christianity. These works are marred in treatment and style by the peculiarities of the man and his age. There is a minute scholastic subdivision of the subjects which is repellent to the ordinary reader. The logic of the arrangement is far from perfect. There is a diffuseness which is none the less tedious because it was characteristic of the scholarly writings of the times. But in spite of these faults, there is a massiveness in the architectonic of the system, a profundity in the thought, an understanding of the meaning of Christianity, a spiritual insight, a comprehensiveness in the treatment of details, a beauty oftentimes in the style, which render these works of unique value. I do not hesitate to say that the future writers on the evidences who are to reconstruct the discipline upon a scientific basis will have to go back to Baxter for their starting-point. Considering the state of the theological sciences of his time, the thoroughness of his work is remarkable. There is scarcely a positive argument for Christianity which he does not bring forward, and scarcely an objection which he does not answer. In not a few points he is far ahead of the apologists of our own times. It is a delight to me to bring these almost forgotten works to the attention of my readers, and to urge upon them their careful study.

My space will not permit me to do more than give the hasty glance at Baxter's system; but I cannot forbear quoting from *The Reasons of the Christian Religion* a passage which gives the outline of his apologetics. Chapter VI. of that work treats "Of the Witness of Jesus Christ, or the demonstrative evidence of his verity and authority, namely, the Spirit, in four parts: 1. Antecedently by prophecy; 2. Constitutively and inherently, the image of God, on his person, life and doctrine; 3. Concomitantly, by the miraculous power and works of Christ and his disciples; 4. Subsequently, in the actual salvation of men by renovation" (Works, 1830, vol. xxi., p. iv). Here is a scheme



which deduces the whole system from a single principle and finds a place for every argument. A better could not be constructed to-day.

It is an evidence of Baxter's originality and superiority to his predecessors and contemporaries (and I may also say to his successors) that he succeeds for the most part in distinguishing the different elements of Christianity, and in avoiding the common identification of revelation and the Bible. To him Christianity is not merely a finished revelation, embalmed in a book, but a present, active power, redeeming men from sin and evidencing itself in their lives.

Of especial interest to us is the full, clear, and satisfactory presentation by Baxter of the evidence of Christian experience. He no longer confines himself, like the older Protestant theologians, to the internal testimony of the Spirit to the truth of the Scriptures, but, looking upon the whole work of the Spirit in the believer's heart, finds in it the great and infallible proof of the reality of Christianity. "Our present actual and habitual faith and renovation of our souls," he says, "and the sacred inclinations and actions therein contained are a standing evidence within us; as the written Word and the miracles of Christ are without us; from which we may soundly argue for the verity of Christianity, and may look on them as an infallible testimony for Christ. For none but the sacred Redeemer of the world, approved by the Father, and working by his Spirit, could do such works as are done on the souls of all that are truly sanctified" (vol. xx., p. 136).

He is far from admitting the claims of the fanatics that we have an immediate intuition of God, or that we receive any objective revelations from him, as if a voice spoke in our souls declaring the testimony of the Spirit. We know the divine power through its effects. In answer to the question, "How shall I know that I have the Spirit of Christ?" he replies, "By the nature of its effects. The Spirit of Christ doth renew the soul to God's image. And one of God's attributes is to be the living God. His being is the ground of the rest. The Spirit of Christ is no fancy, dream, or delusion, nor worketh an imaginary change on the soul, but a real change, making the soul alive that was dead in sin, and becomes a principle of life within us" (ibid., p. 153). He goes on to show how the various attributes of God manifest themselves in this work of the Spirit. But the fact that we know the divine power within through its



effects, and not by an immediate intuition, does not make the knowledge any the less real and satisfactory.

I cannot refrain from quoting two more passages, which not only further exhibit the line of argument, but also illustrate the rich vein of spiritual thought which runs through all these remarkable treatises. Speaking of those who have the Spirit of Christ, Baxter says: "If they cannot answer the cavils of an infidel, yet they can hold fast the ground of faith. Christ hath deeper room and interest in them. He is held faster by the heart than by the head alone. Love will hold Christ when reason alone would let him go. If you will draw such a soul as this to infidelity, you must draw him out of the arms and embracement of Christ. His ear is, as it were, nailed to his door; because he loveth him, he will not leave him" (*ibid.*, p. 156). And again: "So if the tempter should persuade such a man to doubt whether the Gospel be true, or be God's Word, this believer may have recourse into his soul for a testimony of it; thence he can tell the tempter by experience that he hath found the promises of this Gospel made good to him. Christ hath there promised to send his Spirit into the souls of his people, and so he hath done by me; he hath promised to give light to them that sit in darkness, and to guide their feet into the ways of peace; to bind up the broken-hearted, and set at liberty the captives; and all this he hath fulfilled upon me: all that he hath spoken about the power of his Word and grace, and the nature of its effects, I have found upon myself. The help which he promised in temptations, the hearing of prayer, the relief in distress; all these I have found performed; and therefore I know that the Gospel is true" (*ibid.*, p. 162).

#### NOTE 18, PAGE 30.

John Owen, *The Reason of Faith*. This work by no means stands on the level of Baxter's treatises. For the most part it is a discussion of the old question, "Wherefore we believe the Scripture to be the word of God?" and an exposition of the Protestant doctrine of the inward witness of the Spirit, which Owen, in his reaction from the Quaker doctrine of revelation by the inward light, states somewhat too narrowly and guardedly. In places, however, the argument enlarges into the proof of Christian experience. "I must say" he declares (*Owen's Works*, London and Edinburgh, 1852, vol. iv., p. 94), "that although a man be furnished with external arguments of all sorts concerning the divine



original and authority of the Scriptures, although he esteem his motives of credibility to be effectually persuasive, and have the authority of any or all the churches in the world to confirm his persuasion, yet if he have no experience in himself of its divine power, authority, and efficacy, he neither doth nor can believe it to be the Word of God in a due manner—with faith divine and supernatural. But he that hath this experience hath that testimony in himself which will never fail."

## NOTE 19, PAGE 30.

Watts's Three Sermons on The Inward Witness to Christianity, from the text 1 John v. 10: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (Works, Leeds, 1801, vol. i., p. 1 seq.). The sermons were first published in 1720-21. "He then that believes on the Son of God hath the witness, or testimony to Christianity, in himself, for he hath within him the thing testified. He hath eternal life in himself, he hath this eternal life already begun, and it shall be carried on and fulfilled in the days of eternity" (p. 5). "Eternal life consists in happiness and holiness. . . . The happiness of eternal life consists in the pardon of sin, in the special favor of God, and in the pleasure that arises from the regular operation of all our powers and passions" (p. 6). "Holiness may be described by these five necessary ingredients of it: 1. An aversion to and hatred of all sin. 2. A contempt of the present world, in comparison of the future. 3. A delight in the worship and society of God. 4. Zeal and activity in his service. 5. A hearty love to fellow-creatures, and more especially to fellow-saints" (p. 12).

The sermons, though written at the height of the deistic movement, are quite up to the level of Baxter, and are remarkable for their spiritual insight and truth to experience. They deserve the careful perusal of all who desire to be familiar with the subject of these lectures. I gladly express my obligations to them.

## NOTE 20, PAGE 30.

Edwards's Treatise on the Religious Affections, though intended to instruct professed Christians in the evidences of true piety, contains in fact all the essential elements of the proof of Christian experience. The witness of the Spirit to the believer's sonship, as was pointed out in a previous note, involves the evidence of the truth of Christianity. Edwards was aware of this, and



though he does not develop the experimental proof, he distinctly presents it. Thus he says : "A soul may have a kind of intuitive knowledge of the divinity of the things revealed in the Gospel" (Works, New York, 1830, vol. v., p. 178). "It is unreasonable to suppose that God has provided for his people no more than probable evidences of the truth of the Gospel" (ibid., p. 183). "The Gospel of the blessed God does not go abroad a begging for its evidence, so much as some think ; it has its highest and most proper evidence in itself" (ibid., p. 186). This work of Edwards has been most unjustly criticised by unthinking men. I desire to commend it for careful study, assured that it will yield a rich harvest not merely of edification, but also of material for the best work in apologetics.

NOTE 21, PAGE 30.

Dr. Chalmers, in his *Evidences of Christianity*, declines to employ that "internal evidence" "which is founded on the reasonableness of the doctrine, or the agreement which is conceived to exist between the nature of the Christian religion and the character of the Supreme Being" (Select Works, New York, 1850, vol. iv., p. 456). He places his chief dependence upon the arguments from prophecy and miracles, especially the latter. Under these circumstances the experimental evidence could not find its true place. Yet it was not entirely unrecognized. In the "Advertisement" of his *Evidences* Chalmers says : "The author is far from asserting the study of the historical evidence to be the only channel to a faith in the truth of Christianity. How could he, in the face of the obvious fact that there are thousands and thousands of Christians who bear the most undeniable marks of the truth having come home to their understanding 'in demonstration of the Spirit and of power ?' They have an evidence within themselves which the world knoweth not, even the promised manifestations of the Saviour. This evidence is a 'sign to them that believe'" (ibid., p. 415). But having thus asserted the reality and force of this evidence, Chalmers proceeds to ignore it in his apologetics, on the ground that it is not a "sign to them that believe not."

NOTE 22, PAGE 30.

Coleridge, in his reaction from the "Paleyo-Grotian" apologetics, sometimes speaks slightly of the scientific proof of Christianity. We are all familiar with the passage in the *Aids* to



Reflection : "Evidences of Christianity ! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it ; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge of the need of it, and you may safely trust it to its own evidence, remembering only the express declaration of Christ himself : No man cometh to me, unless the Father leadeth him " (Works, Harper's ed., 1853, vol. i., p. 363).

But that this in many respects most stimulating and fruitful of modern English thinkers knew how to use his truer conception of Christianity in such a way as to attain a complete system of evidences, is shown by the profound passage in the *Biographia Literaria*, in which he gives his apologetical scheme, and in which he finds a place not only for the rational and historical evidences, but also for the practical, especially in its experimental form. He thus states his view concerning the true evidences of Christianity : " 1. Its consistency with right reason, I consider as the outer court of the temple—the common area within which it stands. 2. The miracles, with and through which that religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling in the soul of each believer of its exceeding *desirableness*—the experience that he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretokening, that the redemption and the graces propounded to us in Christ are *what* he needs—this I hold to be the true foundation of the spiritual edifice. With the strong *à priori* probability that flows in from 1 and 3 on the correspondent historical evidence of 2, no man can refuse or neglect to make the experiment without guilt. But 4, it is the experience derived from a practical conformity to the conditions of the Gospel—it is the opening eye ; the dawning light ; the terrors and the promises of spiritual growth ; the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of sin hated as sin, and of the incapability of attaining to either without Christ ; it is the sorrow that still rises up from beneath, and the consolation that meets it from above ; the bosom treacheries of the principal in the warfare and the exceeding faithfulness and long-suffering of the uninterested ally—in a word, it is the actual *trial* of the faith in Christ, with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched roof, and the faith itself is the completing key-stone. In order to an efficient belief in Christianity a man must have been a Christian, and this is the seeming *argumentum in circulo*, incident to all spiritual truths, to every subject not presentable under the forms of time and space, as long as we attempt to master by the reflex acts of the understand-



ing what we can only know by the act of becoming. *Do the will of my Father, and ye shall know whether I am of God.*"

Coleridge goes on to say: "These four evidences I believe to have been, and still to be, for the whole church all necessary, all equally necessary; but at present, and for the majority of Christians born in Christian countries, I believe the third and fourth evidences to be the most operative, not as superseding, but as involving a glad, undoubting faith in the two former. *Credidi, ideoque intellexi*, appears to me the dictate equally of philosophy and religion, even as I believe redemption to be the antecedent of sanctification, and not its consequent. All spiritual predicates may be construed indifferently as modes of action or as states of being" (*ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 592 seq.).

#### NOTE 23, PAGE 30.

The Evidences of Christianity, by Daniel Wilson, 1828. New York, 1829. Cf. Lectures XIX. and XX., vol. ii., p. 158 seq.: "The test to which every one may bring the truth of the Christian religion, by humbly submitting to its directions, and making a trial for himself of its promised blessings—1 John v. 10." "Practical directions for the application of the test to which men may bring the Christian revelation—Psalm xxxiv. 8."

#### NOTE 24, PAGE 30.

Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity before the Lowell Institute, January, 1844, by Mark Hopkins, D.D., President of Williams College. Boston, 1846. See Lecture VI., pp. 180-190.

#### NOTE 25, PAGE 30.

The Way of Life, by Charles Hodge, Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. New York and Philadelphia, American Sunday School Union, 1841. Chapter I. sect. ii. (pp. 22-30): "The internal evidence of their divine origin is the proper ground of faith in the Scriptures." Cf. p. 29: "It is the experience of true Christians in all ages and nations that their faith is founded on the spiritual apprehension and experience of the power of the truth. There are multitudes of such Christians, who, if asked why they believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, might find it difficult to give an answer, whose faith is nevertheless both strong and rational. They are conscious of its grounds though they may not be able to state them. They have



the witness in themselves, and know that they believe, not because others believe, or because learned men have proved certain facts which establish the truth of Christianity. They believe in Christ for the same reason that they believe in God ; and they believe in God because they see his glory and feel his authority and power."

## NOTE 26, PAGE 31.

In Germany the reaction from rationalism was twofold. On the one side, it manifested itself in the pantheistic philosophy, of which I have spoken in the present lecture, a movement in its whole tendency destructive to Christianity. On the other side, it showed itself in the reawakening of evangelical theology which takes its start from Schleiermacher. This epoch-making man, at once spiritual Christian and speculative philosopher, vindicated the rights of Christian experience as a realm of reality and its independence of philosophy. The best religious thought of Germany, tired of the narrowness and barrenness of supernaturalism and rationalism, found in the return to the Christian consciousness the satisfaction of its deepest needs.

The so-called "mediating theologians" (*Vermittlungs theologen*), followers of Schleiermacher, but more distinctly evangelical than he, men like Nitzsch, Twisten, Tholuck, Müller, Rothe, and Dorner, made it their aim to incorporate into Christian theology the best elements of the philosophical and religious speculations of their remarkable age. The results were most fruitful. Theology was lifted out of the narrow channels in which it had flowed since the period of scholasticism that set in after the first vigorous life of the Reformation had subsided. The works of these profound and spiritual thinkers are magazines of theological thought, from which theologians of every school in Great Britain and America have drawn some of their best materials.

It is easy to see that this evangelical movement, both in its inception and its progress, was favorable to the recognition and use of the experimental evidence for the truth of Christianity. It is true that the pantheistic attack had the effect of turning the attention of German apologists predominantly to the historical evidences, which they have vindicated with a skill and success deserving the warmest approval. But they have also done good work in the statement of the experimental proof. Its place in apologetical science is recognized by most of the writers on the subject, while the two theologians of whom I am to speak in the following notes



have given especial attention to it. It has been employed upon an imposing scale by the great church-historian Neander, whose colossal work is a continuous presentation of this evidence. He says, in the preface to the first edition of his *History of the Christian Religion and Church* (published in 1825): "To exhibit the history of the church of Christ as a living witness of the divine power of Christianity; as a school of Christian experience; a voice, sounding through the ages, of instruction, of doctrine, and of reproof, for all who are disposed to listen; this, from the earliest period, has been the leading aim of my life and studies." (Torrey's trans., vol. i., p. xxxvi.) Cf. *Der heilige Bernhard*.

I owe this allusion to Neander to the suggestion of my respected teacher and friend, Dr. Philip Schaff, himself a pupil of Neander.

#### NOTE 27, PAGE 31.

See Dorner's *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., pp. 1-172 (Eng. trans., *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. i., pp. 17-184): "The doctrine of faith as the precondition of the knowledge of Christianity as the truth, or Pisteology." Dorner's words in the first section of the *Glaubenslehre* strike the key-note of the coming harmony of philosophy, science, and Christianity: "It may be pronounced to be the universal scientific conviction of the present day—a conviction which has been especially strengthened by the fate of the great philosophical systems—that all knowledge—and with knowledge every science has to do—presupposes *experience*, external or internal." Faith, according to Dorner, involves the certainty of the truth of Christianity. By faith in this distinctively Christian sense he understands not the faith that rests upon historical authority or that which is based upon the teachings of philosophy, but that which involves an actual contact with God in Christ. It is this faith "which inwardly appropriates the Gospel, and to which the Gospel commends itself by a most peculiar experience as the power of salvation and as the truth, which establishes a new mode of existence and consciousness, namely, that of the children of God" (*Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., p. 128; Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 141). This faith involves a new consciousness of God, of self, and of the world, and this "is at the same time associated with the certainty that it and its harmony are not merely a subjective imagination, but are objectively true and divinely wrought. Faith knows infallibly that the Spirit, who reveals to us at once our adoption and the divine



Fatherhood, and who glorifies Christ, is *truth* (1 John v. 8). For we know the truth by the presence of truth in the spirit, which truth makes itself evident as light does, and proves itself efficacious by contact with our spirit, imparting knowledge; and by contact with the Spirit of God we know that the Spirit of God has imparted this certainty, which is therefore infallible (1 John v. 6)" (Glaubensl., vol. i., p. 142; Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 155).

Dorner's *Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie* is full of valuable matter bearing on the subject before us. While not in all respects agreeing with him in his conception of the evidence of Christian experience, I have been indebted to him at every step. Indeed Dorner's writings, and his lectures, to which I listened many years ago when a student in Berlin, first emancipated me from the rationalistic theology and apologetics which I had imbibed from my previous reading and study.

To the works already mentioned I should add the article entitled *Die Mansel-Maurice'sche Controverse*, in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, vol. vi., pp. 320-427.

#### NOTE 28, PAGE 31.

*System der christlichen Gewissheit*, von Dr. Fr. H. R. Frank, ordentlichem Professor der Theologie in Erlangen, 1st ed., 1870; 2d ed., 1881-4. One volume has been translated under the title of the *System of the Christian Certainty*, by Rev. M. J. Evans, B.A. Edinburgh, 1886.

Frank will not allow that his work is directly apologetical in its character: He says, "The task which is herewith set for Christian theology has points of contact with the apologetic endeavors of the present day; but is essentially distinguished from them by the fact that in place of wishing to produce or maintain Christian certainty, or to restore it where it has been shaken, it presupposes the same as existing, consequently, merely calls for its scientific testimony about itself in the sense of Christian gnosis, to the end of its rendering an account of itself, and furnishing the proof for its right of existence" (vol. i., p. 20; Eng. trans., p. 18 seq.). Apologetics, however, is not concerned exclusively with the defence of Christianity, but, as has been shown in the preceding lecture, aims to present the positive evidence upon which it rests. In fact, no more important contribution to apologetical science has been made during the present generation than this remarkable work of Frank.



Frank bases the certainty of the Christian upon the "special moral experience" "of regeneration and conversion, a transformation of the man's moral state of life, accomplished by ethical impulses not proceeding from the subject himself, but yet willingly received by him ; in virtue of which a new *I*, as innermost determining ground of his personal moral life, is henceforth distinguished from that hitherto prevailing, and in conflict with the same asserts its central, dominant position" (vol. i., p. 113 ; Eng. trans., p. 108).

In this experience faith comes into contact with three classes of objects, with regard to which it possesses certainty, and which together make up the system of Christian certainty. These are : the *immanent* objects of faith, including the fact of habitual and actual sin, the natural unfreedom of the will, the habitual and actual righteousness of the Christian, and the spiritual freedom of his will, and the certain hope of the Christian consummation ; the *transcendent* objects, including the reality and personality of God, the tri-unity of God, and the God-man, the author through his atonement of our freedom from guilt ; and the *transeunt* objects, which mediate between the immanent and the transcendent, including the church, the Word, and the Scriptures, the sacraments and miracles, revelation and inspiration (ibid., p. 191 seq., etc. ; Eng. trans., p. 183 seq.). Moreover, the Christian certainty establishes on a new basis the objects of the natural life, namely, the physical world and the nature of man.

These facts are treated positively, and also in respect to the opposition of the false tendencies of rationalism, pantheism, materialism, and criticism.

Those who are familiar with Frank will recognize my obligations to him at every step, obligations which I gladly acknowledge. To a considerable extent I have adopted his method and his terminology. I have, however, ventured to differ from him at not a few important points. This remarkable book has never received the notice and careful study it deserves. I earnestly commend it to my readers,



## NOTES TO LECTURE II.

## NOTE 1, PAGE 35.

Baxter truly says in the *Reasons of the Christian Religion* (Works, 1830, vol. xxi., p. 132), after describing the natural revelation: "Though all this is legible in nature, which I have thence transcribed, yet if I had not another teacher, I know not whether I should ever have found it there. Nature is now a very hard book; when I have learnt it by my teacher's help, I can tell partly what is there; but at the first perusal I could not understand it. It requireth a great deal of time and study and help to understand that which, when we do understand it, is as plain as the highway." Nevertheless, the fact remains that the natural revelation is preparatory for the Christian, and that the latter cannot be apprehended without the aid of the former.

## NOTE 2, PAGE 36.

Baxter's Works, vol. xxi., p. 181.

## NOTE 3, PAGE 37.

I desire to express my especial obligations, so far as the present lecture is concerned, to Flint's *Theism*, Pfleiderer's *Religionsphilosophie*, Trendelenberg's *Logische Untersuchungen*, Martineau's *Study of Religion*, and particularly to Dr. Samuel Harris's *Philosophical Basis of Theism and Self-Revelation of God*. These two last works seem to me to rank among the noblest statements of the theistic philosophy ever written. They have been to me, ever since their publication, a source of constant intellectual, and, I may add, spiritual, delight.

## NOTE 4, PAGE 37.

"*Modus Deum cognoscendi et colendi.*" See Luthardt, *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, 7th ed., p. 13.

## NOTE 5, PAGE 38.

Cf. Harris's *Self-Revelation of God*, pp. 15-29.

## NOTE 6, PAGE 38.

Henry B. Smith, *Introduction to Christian Theology*, p. 52 seq.



## NOTE 7, PAGE 39.

E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Amer. ed., 1874, vol. i. pp. 417-502, vol. ii., pp. 1-442.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 39.

Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, Pt. I., pp. 184-440.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 40.

Respecting the universality of religion, see Tiele, *History of Religion*, translated by Carpenter, Boston, 1877, p. 6; Flint, *Anti-Theistic Theories*, pp. 250-289; Max Müller, *Origin and Growth of Religion*, Amer. ed., p. 76, also pp. 92, 93; Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, vol. i., p. 11 seq.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 41.

*Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, 1780.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 41.

Cf. Harris, *Self-Revelation of God*, p. 15: "Christianity as the absolute religion does not deny that there are other religions. On the contrary, it takes up into itself all which is true and right in the ethnic religions. It is in antagonism to them only so far as they are erroneous in belief, practice, or spirit. It is the goal toward which they are blindly groping, the redemption of which they obscurely feel the need, and for which they dimly hope. It would bring them to an end, as the sun brings the light of the stars to an end, not by quenching it, but by absorbing it in the light which fills the firmament."

## NOTE 12, PAGE 43.

Alciphron; or, *The Minute Philosopher*, in *Seven Dialogues*. Containing an Apology for the Christian Religion against those who are called Free-Thinkers. This was published in 1732. In 1713 had appeared the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 43.

Edwards adopted Berkeley's philosophy and extended it to spirit as well as to matter. His view of the relation of God to the human soul appears at its best in the *Treatise on the Religious*



Affections. See Lecture I., Note 20. Another side of the same doctrine appears in Edwards's theory of the divine efficiency, which in the hands of Hopkins and Emmons ran into a pantheism that made God the author of sin as well as of holiness. See the *Freedom of the Will and Original Sin*.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 43.

"Hæc Idea quæ in nobis est, requirit Deum pro causa, Deusque proinde existit." *Meditations III. and V., and Appendix.*

## NOTE 15, PAGE 43.

*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. iv., ch. x.

## NOTE 16, PAGE 44.

*Ibid.*, sect. 10 : "If, then, there must be something eternal, let us see what sort of being it must be. And to that, it is very obvious to reason, that it must necessarily be a cogitative being. For it is as impossible to conceive that ever bare incogitative matter should produce a thinking intelligent being, as that nothing should of itself produce matter."

## NOTE 17, PAGE 45.

*Natural Theology; or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, collected from the Appearances of Nature*, published in 1802.

## NOTE 18, PAGE 45.

These treatises were the result of a legacy of £8,000 left by the Rev. Francis Henry Egerton, eighth Earl of Bridgewater (born 1758, died 1829), to be paid to the authors of a series of works "on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the creation." Chalmers wrote on *The Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man*; Kidd, On the *Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man*; Whewell, on *Astronomy and General Physics considered with Reference to Natural Theology*; Bell, On the *Hand, its Mechanism and Vital Endowments as evincing Design*; Roget, On *Animal and Vegetable Physiology, considered with reference to Natural Theology*; Buckland, On *Geology and Mineralogy*; Kirby, On the *History, Habits, and Instincts of Animals*; and Prout, On *Chemistry, Meteorology, and the Function of Digestion*.



tion, considered with reference to Natural Theology. These works mark the highwater limit of the old natural theology.

NOTE 19, PAGE 46.

We have learned much from the idealistic philosophy of Germany. This philosophy, as we saw in the last lecture, is essentially pantheistic, and in its main tendency antagonistic to Christian theism. But there is a better side to it, which we may not ignore. It was a reaction, though in an extreme and partially erroneous form, from the barren rationalism of the preceding age, a reaction which was on the whole favorable to the theistic conception of God. There is always a deeper movement which underlies both the false and the true thought of an age, saving the false from being all false and making it a powerful and beneficent agency in correcting the errors inherent in the true. God uses the partial truth and the partial falsehood for the manifestation of the higher truth. It is his method, and it is a glorious method. Error unconsciously works out truth; nay, it has its own deposit of truth, committed to it by God, who could not do his work in a world constituted like ours without it.

The philosophical movement in Germany that culminated in the pantheism of Hegel—which I do not hesitate to call pantheism, in spite of the favor with which it is at present received by many English and American philosophers who would fain be called theists—has led to important modifications of the old view. Kant by his criticism of the proofs for the divine existence destroyed the power of the traditional theistic argument, as by his idealism he gave the death-blow to deism. His pantheistic followers have taught us to lay due emphasis upon the divine immanence, which was once ignored in the interests of the divine transcendence. It is no slight change in our view of God, that we have been brought to perceive his presence in the operations of the universe as the underlying life and power of all. It is well that we have been taught, even by those who are in so many respects our opponents, to realize that the history of the world and of mankind is a progressive revelation of the divine. We may be thankful that we have been led to see the folly of the view that the Infinite cannot condescend to the finite, and in lieu of it have attained the higher conception of God which makes him the omnipresent Ground and indwelling Life of the finite. Not least among our obligations to this reaction from deism is the recognition of the fact that



the springs of the human spirit, in its intellectual as well as its moral and religious functions, are in the infinite Spirit, the Light of all our seeing, the Source of all our power.

In similar language I may speak of agnosticism. Though in its main positions diametrically opposed to theism, it has yet exerted an influence for good, not to be ignored, upon the theistic philosophy of religion. I have spoken of it in the first lecture. Here I shall refer only to the conception of the Absolute with which it furnishes us. Meagre as this conception is, lacking in all positive characteristics, giving us the form of infinite Being without the contents, still it is in some respects an advance upon the old deism. The agnostic's unknown Cause is a present and active Being, not a remote, shadowy, inoperative *Primum Movens*. The phenomena of which it is the hidden Ground are due to its immediate efficiency, not to a train of agencies set in motion ages ago. Agnosticism insists that we should find the Cause of all things at work here and now. Its Infinite is present everywhere in the finite, its mystery turning the most commonplace things and events into occasions of reverence and awe. Herbert Spencer declares : " When implying that the Infinite and Eternal Energy manifested alike within us and without us, and to which we must ascribe not only the manifestations themselves but the law of their order, will hereafter continue to be, under its transfigured form, an object of religious sentiment ; I have implied that whatever components of this sentiment disappear, there must ever survive those which are appropriate to the consciousness of a Mystery that cannot be fathomed and a Power that is Omnipresent " (The Nineteenth Century, Amer. ed., vol. xvi., p. 25). I shall not attempt to weigh the deistic and agnostic theories, and to determine the comparative truth and value of each ; but this I will say, that considering the peculiar tendencies and needs of our age, the effect of agnosticism upon the theistic philosophy of religion has been not altogether evil.

#### NOTE 20, PAGE 46.

The movement in physical science of which mention was made in the last lecture has also contributed its influence to the betterment of the philosophy of religion. The old method was radically vicious, a relic of the mediæval scholasticism. Not only the so-called *à priori* argument, but the whole theistic procedure, was a dealing with abstractions rather than with things. Modern sci



ence has made such reasoning as was in vogue in theology and philosophy during the Middle Ages ridiculous. First we must have facts, then reasoning about facts. We cannot spin a theology out of our intellects as a spider evolves his web from his bowels. Physical science rightly demands that all sciences, if they will lay claim to the name, should rest upon a solid basis of ascertained and systematized objective fact. Moreover, physical science has taught us a lesson of patience in investigation, modesty in stating our conclusions, willingness to be taught, readiness to review and modify accepted theory, which has been of the highest value to the religious philosopher. If the transcendent sphere which the theist claims to exist is a reality, it is to be investigated in the same spirit as the lower spheres, and, so far as the nature of the subject permits, by the same methods. Dogmatism has no place here. The kingdom of truth is never to be degraded into a kingdom of assertions.

## NOTE 21, PAGE 48.

Thomas of Aquinas has said (*Summ. Theol.*, I., II., Qu. cix., Art. 1): "As the outward visible sun illumines this material world, so God, the intellectual sun, shines within us; therefore, the natural light of reason which inhabits our souls is an illumination from God, through which it becomes light in us, a likeness to the divine substance itself."

## NOTE 22, PAGE 49.

Dr. Harris says (*Self-Revelation of God*, pp. 448, 449): "The old distinction of natural and revealed religion, and natural and revealed theology, is no longer available." "Christianity, then, is not distinguished from the so-called natural religion and theology by the fact of revelation, but by the fact of an additional revelation peculiar to itself." This is true, but not new.

## NOTE 23, PAGE 50.

*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 1781.

## NOTE 24, PAGE 51.

*Ibid.*, 2d ed., p. 294 seq.

## NOTE 25, PAGE 52.

*Ibid.*, p. 672, p. 784.



NOTE 26, PAGE 52.

Ibid., p. 735.

NOTE 27, PAGE 53.

Contemporary Review, vol. xli., p. 859, Professor T. H. Green,

NOTE 28, PAGE 57.

Meditation II.

NOTE 29, PAGE 57.

Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Bk. IV., ch. ix., sect. 3: "Experience, then, convinces us that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence, and an internal infallible perception that we are."

NOTE 30, PAGE 58.

Tennyson, In Memoriam, xlv. Cf. Porter's Human Intellect, p. 101.

NOTE 31, PAGE 62.

First Principles, Amer. ed., p. 98.

NOTE 32, PAGE 62.

Tulloch, Theism, Amer. ed., p. 329.

NOTE 33, PAGE 62.

Theism, p. 288.

NOTE 34, PAGE 67.

Cf. Natural Religion, by J. R. Seeley.

## NOTES TO LECTURE III.

NOTE 1, PAGE 70.

Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Bk. I., ch. i., sect. 1.

NOTE 2, PAGE 70.

Ibid., Bk. IV., ch. iii., sect. 6. Cf. The Reasonableness of Christianity, in which Locke teaches the doctrine at present known as that of "conditional immortality." By Adam's transgression men have come under the punishment of death, by which, Locke says



(sect. 4), can be understood "nothing but a ceasing to be, the losing of all action of life and sense." "From this estate of death Jesus restores all mankind to life" (sect. 8). "Immortality and bliss belong to the righteous; those who have lived in an exact conformity to the law of God are out of the reach of death; but an exclusion from paradise and loss of immortality is the portion of sinners" (sect. 12). Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity is largely occupied with the attempt to show the unreasonableness of orthodoxy. It is through and through rationalistic.

#### NOTE 3, PAGE 72.

Cf. Bushnell's *Nature and the Supernatural*. Harris (*Self-Revelation of God*, p. 84), says: "In truth, the line between the supernatural and the natural is between personal beings and impersonal." The whole passage is interesting (pp. 83-86). On the other side, cf. Henry B. Smith, *Apologetics*, p. 18 seq. He says (p. 23): "The true real Supernatural, in its essence, is the Absolute, the Divine."

#### NOTE 4, PAGE 74.

*The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, 1871.

#### NOTE 5, PAGE 74.

*Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature*, 1863.

#### NOTE 6, PAGE 74.

*Mental Evolution in Man. Origin of Human Faculty.*

#### NOTE 7, PAGE 75.

*Darwinism, an Exposition of the Theory of Natural Selection*, 1889.

#### NOTE 8, PAGE 76.

E. B. Tylor says (*Anthropology*, p. 54): "On the whole, the safest conclusion warranted by facts is that the mental machinery of the lower animals is roughly similar to our own up to a limit. Beyond this limit the human mind opens into wide ranges of thought and feeling which the beast-mind shows no sign of approaching."

#### NOTE 9, PAGE 76.

Cf. Harris, *Philosophical Basis of Theism*, p. 455 seq.



## NOTE 10, PAGE 77.

It is instructive to notice how soon in the case of Strauss pantheism ran into a view scarcely different from materialism. Cf. *Der alte und der neue Glaube*. Also, H. B. Smith, *Faith and Philosophy*, p. 443 seq.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 79.

*Westminster Sermons*, London and New York, 1874, p. 165.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 79.

*Treatise of Human Nature*, Bk. I., pt. iv., sect. 2.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 80.

*Principles of Psychology*, Am. ed., vol. i., pp. 193, 500.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 80.

Seth, *Hegelianism and Personality*, London, 1887. Cf. Fisher's *Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, p. 1 seq.: "Belief in the personality of man, and belief in the personality of God, stand or fall together." Fisher is concerned to prove the personality of God, but the rule works both ways. See also Julius Müller's *Christliche Lehre von der Sünde* (5th ed., vol. i., p. 25 seq.): "A philosophy which, by its own theory and the consequent laws of its own method, can never do justice to personality and freedom as principles of real life, is the born foe of Christianity and theology, and excludes the idea of their harmonious progress and their mutual enlargement. And conversely, a philosophy which truly realizes the principle of personality in God and in man is the natural ally of Christianity, though at times it may lead to differences and contradictions concerning isolated doctrines" (Urwick's trans., vol. i., p. 24).

## NOTE 15, PAGE 83.

*Principles of Psychology*, Amer. ed., vol. i., p. 503. In the same chapter (IX., on the Will) Spencer says, p. 500: "Long before reaching this point, most readers must have perceived that the doctrines developed in the last two parts of this work are at variance with the current tenets respecting the freedom of the will. That every one is at liberty to do what he desires to do (supposing there are no external hindrances), all admit; though people



of confused ideas commonly suppose this to be the thing denied. But that every one is at liberty to desire or not to desire, which is the real proposition involved in the dogma of free will, is negatived by the analysis of consciousness as by the contents of the preceding chapters."

NOTE 16, PAGE 84.

See the Westminster Confession of Faith, ch. ix., Of Free Will : " God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil." " Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation."

NOTE 17, PAGE 84.

A Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will, which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame. Published 1754.

NOTE 18, PAGE 86.

See the Works of Nathaniel Emmons, D.D., edited by Jacob Ide, D.D., Boston, 1842. Especially vol. iv., Part VII., Divine and Human Agency. God "exerts his agency in producing all the free and voluntary exercises of every moral agent, as constantly and fully as in preserving and supporting his existence" (p. 383). I have spoken in the text of Emmons, but equally strong assertions of the divine efficiency are to be found in the writings of Samuel Hopkins : The System of Doctrines contained in Divine Revelation, etc., published in 1792 ; see ch. iv., On the Decrees of God.

NOTE 19, PAGE 87.

Popular Lectures on Theological Themes, pp. 184, 185.

NOTE 20, PAGE 87.

English Men of Letters Series, Hume, p. 192.

NOTE 21, PAGE 87.

Popular Lectures, etc., pp. 185, 186.

An interesting illustration of the connection between the doctrine of necessity and the denial of the divine existence is to be found in the defection from the Christian faith of that clear-headed woman



an, Harriet Martineau. The process throughout was thoroughly logical. It began in her acceptance of the necessitarian position. It went steadily onward until she reached the condition of complete agnosticism, admitting indeed the existence of some kind of First Cause, but denying all knowledge of it, and refusing to clothe it with any of the attributes of God in the distinctive sense of the term. From a remarkably devout, prayerful woman, she came first to abandon petition in prayer, on the ground that the divine will is fixed and cannot be changed; then to abandon prayer altogether, because she no longer believed in a personal Being as the object of prayer. All this was perfectly consistent, and equally so her consequent denial of immortality. She died without even the hope of the heathen. A few days before her death she wrote to one of her most intimate friends, himself an agnostic: "I cannot think of any future as at all probable, except the 'annihilation' from which some people recoil with so much horror. I find myself here in the universe, I know not how, whence, or why. I see everything in the universe go out and disappear, and I see no reason for supposing that it is not an actual and entire death. And for *my* part I have no objection to such an extinction." (Harriet Martineau's Autobiography, Amer. ed., vol. ii. pp. 556, 557.)

Thousands of intelligent persons in our age have gone down the same path from the same starting-point. For one who stands in the full light of Christian experience the doctrine of necessity may have little danger. But for those who have not attained a personal knowledge of the Christian realities it is full of peril. It seems strange that men like Dr. Hodge do not realize this fact. They think that their doctrine is harmless because it differs from that of the non-theistic advocates of necessity in putting a personal God behind the necessity. But they forget that the existence of such a God cannot be proved from the stand-point of necessity. Men, left to themselves, will accept the necessity without the personal God.

#### NOTE 22, PAGE 87.

The doctrine of freedom presented in the text is that which has emerged from the century of discussion on the subject of the will, carried on by our American theologians. In no other country has this subject received such attention and profound thought. While Edwards's determinism has given much aid and comfort to the common enemy, it has not been wholly evil in its effects. It



has led to a fuller examination of the whole subject. Edwards was one of those great men who know how to state an old problem in new form, and to lay down distinctions and principles which open the way for new solutions. The work of such men is not to be estimated simply by the results to which they come themselves; we must look also at its effects upon others. The old doctrine of freedom fell into disrepute on account of its connection with the theory of the indifference of the will. To this theory Edwards gave the death-blow, and it is not strange that he went to the opposite extreme. But the result has been to discover that higher statement of the truth which unites the valid elements in both the doctrines, that of indeterminism and that of determinism.

I know no better statement of the true doctrine of freedom than that which is given by Dr. Harris in his *Philosophical Basis of Theism* (pp. 349-407). To this I refer those who desire a fuller view of the position taken in the lecture.

I would call especial attention to the distinction between choice and volition, which was first brought out clearly by our American writers. A careful observance of this distinction will remove many of the difficulties which beset the thoughtful mind in its examination of this subject. The best modern theologians and philosophers recognize this distinction, though not commonly using the terms by which we describe it. Cf. *Dorner, System der christlichen Sittenlehre*, p. 119: "Die Entschliessung ist nicht mehr ein einfaches, mit Unwillkürlichkeit vermischtes Begehren oder Verlangen, sondern ein potenziertes, ein inneres Wollen, das zu seinem Inhalt hat ein anderes nachfolgendes Wollen, nämlich ein den Zweck realisiren sollendes Wollen oder ein Wollen der That. Das ist ein Wollen des Wollens, ein Wollen in zweiter Potenz." The first "Wollen" is the choice; the second, the volition.

It is to be noted that the true doctrine of freedom does not ignore the limitations of this power. In order that the power of choice should be exercised, the conditions of choice must be present. These, however, come from without, and are connected with that power of action over which man has no absolute control. Accordingly, freedom in the sense of the power of choice is entirely consistent with inability. The sinner in his unconverted state is free in the sense of possessing the power of choice, but he is unable on account of sin to perform any spiritual good accompanying salvation. Let this inability be counteracted by divine grace, and



his power of choice asserts itself ; but it will not do so before, though all the time there.

It is also to be noted that our great permanent choices, in which freedom persists through long periods of time, to a great extent determine our subordinate choices and volitions. But the former are comparatively few in number.

Moreover, it is not to be forgotten that freedom is a matter of development, like the other powers and capacities of man. See Dorner's *Christliche Sittenlehre*, pp. 257-262 ; also his *Glaubenslehre*, vol. ii., pp. 163-181. Eng. trans., vol. iii., p. 59 seq.

NOTE 23, PAGE 89.

Data of Ethics, Amer. ed., p. 28.

NOTE 24, PAGE 90.

Ibid., p. 138.

NOTE 25, PAGE 91.

Dorner, *Christliche Sittenlehre*, p. 218 : "Nicht sowohl der Mensch hat das Gewissen, als das Gewissen hat den Menschen."

NOTE 26, PAGE 91.

Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p. 68 : "What Act of Legislature was there that *thou* shouldst be happy ? A little while ago thou hadst no right to be at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be happy, but to be unhappy !"

NOTE 27, PAGE 94.

Our New England theology reached this position in the systems of Hopkins and Emmons, systems which have been rightly regarded as pantheistic in their tendency. Cf. *Dwight's Theology*, New York, 1830, vol. i., p. 254 seq. Hopkins says (*System of Doctrines*, Boston, 1811, vol. i., p. 114) : "Though there be things which are *in themselves evil*, even in their own nature and tendency, such as sin and misery ; yet considered in their connection with the whole, and as they are necessary in the best system to accomplish the greatest good, the most important and best ends, they are, in this view, desirable, good, and not evil. And in this view, 'there is no *absolute evil* in the universe.' There are evils, *in themselves considered* ; but considered as connected with the whole, they are not evil, but good. As *shades* are necessary in a picture to render it most complete and beautiful, they are, in this view and connec-



tion, desirable; and the picture would be imperfect and marred were they not included in it; yet considered separately, and unconnected with the whole, they have no beauty, but deformity, and are very disagreeable. So moral evil is, in itself considered, in its own nature and tendency, most odious, hurtful, and undesirable; but in the hands of omnipotence, infinite wisdom, and goodness, it may be introduced into the most perfect plan and system, and so disposed and counteracted in its nature and tendency, as to be a necessary part of it, in order to render it most complete and desirable."

## NOTE 28, PAGE 94.

Hegel says, speaking of the account of the Fall in Genesis: "Der Zustand der Unschuld, dieser paradiesische Zustand, ist der thierische. Das Paradies ist ein Park, wo nur Thiere und nicht die Menschen bleiben können. Denn das Thier ist mit Gott eins, aber nur an sich. Nur der Mensch ist Geist, d. h. für sich selbst. Dieses Fürsichsein, dieses Bewusstsein, ist aber zugleich die Trennung von dem allgemeinen göttlichen Geist. Der Sündenfall ist daher den ewige Mythos des Menschen wodurch er eben Mensch wird" (*Philosophie der Geschichte*, p. 233, quoted by Luthardt, *Komp. der Dogm.*, 7th ed., p. 155). Cf. Hegel's *Philosophie der Religion*, vol. ii., pp. 257-277, and the comments on his doctrine of sin in Müller's *Christliche Lehre von der Sünde*, 5th ed., vol. i., p. 541 seq.

## NOTE 29, PAGE 95.

Spencer, *Data of Ethics*, Amer. ed., p. 25.

## NOTE 30, PAGE 95.

Dr. Raleigh, in an address published in the *New York Independent*. I have been unable to recover the date.

## NOTE 31, PAGE 98.

See Bushnell's *Christian Nurture*, 1861, p. 90 seq.

## NOTE 32, PAGE 101.

The evolutionary optimism may be so worked out as to become substantially theistic. Cf. John Fiske's *Destiny of Man*, and *Idea of God*.

## NOTE 33, PAGE 101.

Augustin's *Confessions*, Bk. I., ch. i., sect. 1.



## NOTE 34, PAGE 103.

Cf. Biedermann, *Christliche Dogmatik*, 2d ed., vol. ii., p. 656 seq.

## NOTE 35, PAGE 103.

George Eliot (Marian Evans Cross):

"O may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better by their presence; live  
In pulses stirred to generosity,  
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn  
For miserable aims that end with self,  
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,  
And with their mild persistence urge man's search  
To vaster issues."

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NOTES TO LECTURE IV.

## NOTE 1, PAGE 110.

Lecture I., p. 24 seq.

## NOTE 2, PAGE 112.

There are many reasons why I should like to take for my typical case that of the Christian child who from the first has been enfolded in the parental faith, born of holy seed, consecrated and baptized in infancy, a child of the covenant, educated for Christ, carried from stage to stage of childhood with no real wandering from the fold, so that conversion, if not a process rather than a crisis, is at most the acceptance by the mature will of an inheritance enjoyed from the first and never lost. Theoretically this is the normal case. It is the ideal toward which we are rapidly moving. In the last days it will doubtless be universal. But at present it is far rarer than it should be, and for our purpose, which is scientific as well as practical, it is better to take the case, which is more common, of a Christian experience which does not begin until a certain degree of maturity is attained, after a period of more or less decided sin and separation from the fold of Christ, and which thus begins in what is, in the strictest sense, a conver-



sion, a crisis involving a change of the whole tendency and aim of life.

Frank, starting from the Lutheran doctrine of baptismal regeneration, finds it necessary to distinguish between regeneration, in which the germ of divine grace is implanted in the heart, and conversion, when this germ fructifies and manifests itself through the action of the will and the external change thus brought about. In his development of the facts involved in the Christian's certainty he does not view conversion so much in the light of a crisis as of a change effected in the man. A conversion that antedates conscious experience would offer no barrier to the use of the fact in the system of Christian certainty. The new I and the old exist alongside of each other in the Christian, the former on the throne and the latter thrust from it, and this is proof that the change has been wrought at some time and somehow. (*System der christlichen Gewissheit*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 113 seq. Evans's trans., p. 108 seq.)

NOTE 3, PAGE 113.

Cf. Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., p. 131: "Nun bietet sich innerhalb der Christenheit dreierlei dar, was Organ oder Vehikel der Gottesgemeinschaft, Repräsentation der Nähe Gottes bei dem Menschen sein will: die *religiöse Gemeinschaft*, sei es in freier socialer Form, sei es in organisirter als Kirche; sodann *Heilige Schriften* als Denkmäler oder Urkunden göttlicher Offenbarung oder des Wortes Gottes an die Menschen; endlich *heilige Handlungen* symbolischer Art, welche als Gottgestiftete verheissen, dass mit ihnen eine göttliche Mittheilung sich für den Empfänglichen verbinde, d. h. die Sacramente." See the whole passage. (Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 144.)

NOTE 4, PAGE 117.

Attention should also be called to the fact that the Scripture writers spoke out of their own personal experience of the Christian realities. This experience was a normal one. Their inspiration did not raise them above the imperfection common to Christians. What it did was to enable them to describe the experience in its truth and to set alongside of it the ideal of the Christian life.

NOTE 5, PAGE 119.

Frank treats the Word, the church, and the sacraments, as *transcunt* objects of faith, and considers them first in his second vor



ume, after he has discussed the immanent and transcendent objects of faith. This is in accordance with his purpose, which is not apologetical but aims at the analysis of the contents of Christian experience for the sole object of showing to the Christian the grounds upon which his faith is based. It seems to me, however, that even for this purpose it would be better to begin with an account of the instrumentalities by which the divine grace was first communicated and is now maintained in the believer's soul. For the purpose of these lectures the method followed is certainly the only satisfactory one.

## NOTE 6, PAGE 124.

Cf. what Frank says on the congruousness of Christianity to man's nature, vol. i., p. 127 seq. Frank is speaking of the Christian life as already established, but much that he says applies to the subject treated in the text. See Dorner, *Die Mansel-Maurice'sche Controverse*, *Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie*, vol. vi., p. 410.

## NOTE 7, PAGE 125.

It is to this period that we must refer the striking words of Coleridge (*Aids to Reflection*, Works, New York, 1853, vol. i., p. 130 seq.): "Awakened by the cock-crow (a sermon, a calamity, a sick-bed, or a providential escape) the Christian pilgrim sets out in the morning twilight, while yet the truth (the νόμος τέλειος ὁ τῆς ἐλευθερίας) is below the horizon. Certain necessary consequences of his past life and his present undertaking will be seen by the refraction of its light; more will be apprehended and conjectured. The phantasms, that had predominated during the long hours of darkness are still busy."

Christian started on his pilgrimage to the heavenly city long before he found peace; the first part of the way was made with the burden still on his back, and he did not lose it until he came to the foot of the cross. This was Bunyan's own experience. In every awakened soul God's Spirit is at work, but it is not yet a converted soul.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 128.

It will be understood that I use the terms choice and volition in a sense not accepted by all philosophers. By choice is meant the selection of an end or object of action; by volition, the executive act of the will by which the choice is carried into effect. See Lecture III., p. 80 seq.



## NOTE 9, PAGE 129.

The truth is, this idea of faith goes back to the early church. For Augustin's view, see Lecture I., Note 12. Cf. Julius Müller, *Dogmatische Abhandlungen:—Gedanken über Glauben und Wissen*. According to Thomas Aquinas, "Faith is an act of the intellect, which assents to divine truth in the strength of the will moved by God through grace" (*Secunda Secundæ*, qu. 2. art. 9. Kahnis, *Luth. Dogmatik*, 1st ed., vol. ii., p. 310). In spite of Anselm's deeper view of the relation of experience to faith, he holds substantially the same view of faith as Aquinas; he represents it "as a knowledge, which first receives life through the will, causing us to strive toward what we believe" (*Monol. c. 67 seq.* Kahnis, *ib.*, p. 309).

The Reformation failed to purge out the rationalistic leaven contained in this definition of faith. Thus Calvin says: "We shall have a perfect definition of faith, if we say that it is a steadfast and assured knowledge of God's kindness toward us, which being grounded upon the truth of the free promise in Christ, is both revealed to our minds and sealed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (*Institutes*, Bk. III., ch. ii., sect. 7). All the more remarkable is the definition of the Westminster Confession, given in the text. The rationalistic reaction toward the close of the seventeenth century brought the old intellectualistic conception of faith into renewed currency. Unfortunately it still survives. Locke, who generally states the rationalistic position in its clearest form, thus defines reason and faith: "Reason, . . . as contradistinguished to faith, I take to be the discovery of the certainty or probability of such proposition or truths, which the mind arrives at by deduction from such ideas which it has got by the use of its natural faculties, viz., by sensation or reflection. Faith, on the other side, is the assent to any proposition, not thus made out by the deductions of reason, but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication. This way of discovering truths to men we call revelation" (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. IV., ch. xviii., sect. 2).

## NOTE 10, PAGE 129.

See an article on Faith, by Dr. Mark Hopkins, in the *Princeton Review*, September, 1873, p. 511 seq.



## NOTE 11, PAGE 130.

“Der Gegenstand unsers Glaubens ist Christus, der menschgewordene Gottessohn, der sich selbst gegeben hat zu unsrer Erlösung, der einige Mittler unsrer Gemeinschaft mit Gott. . . . Er selbst ist der Gegenstand des seligmachenden Glaubens, also nicht eigentlich die Thatsachen seines Lebens, seine übernatürliche Erzeugung, seine heiligen Werke und Wunder, sein Leiden, Sterben, Auferstehen, seine Himmelfahrt, sondern Er in seiner ewig lebendigen, sich wirksam mittheilenden Persönlichkeit als der uns Gegenwärtige, Er als der verherrlichte Heiland, der er jetzt und allezeit ist, seitdem es eine an ihn glaubende Gemeinde giebt” (Müller, Dogmatische Abhandlungen, p. 4).

## NOTE 12, PAGE 131.

2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; John v. 24; 1 John iii. 14; Rom. vi. 13; Eph. v. 14; John i. 12, 13; John iii. 3-8; Tit. iii. 5; 1 John iii. 9; Eph. iv. 22-24; Col. iii. 9, 10; Psalm li. 10; Ezek. xi. 19.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 131.

Thus Frank everywhere. He speaks of conversion as an “Umwandlung seines (des Subjectes) sittlichen Lebensbestandes, vermöge deren ein neues Ich . . . sich fortan unterscheidet,” etc. (vol. i., p. 113. Evans’s trans., p. 108). Martensen uses the same terminology, and the German theologians generally.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 132.

Frank, vol. i., p. 102. (Evans’s trans., p. 99.)

## NOTE 15, PAGE 134.

Cf. Frank, vol. i., p. 121: “Side by side with the bent of will of the old man stands that of the new; in such wise, indeed, that the latter occupies the centre of his being, and thence as ruler determines the same, but for that very reason is engaged in constant conflict with the former bent of will, which continues to exist. In this manifestation and operation is now immediately displayed the essence of the moral transformation, as consisting in the fact that that new point which is the source of the personal self-determining, the new I, has been planted in the subject, and that it has been installed in the place where hitherto the old I had held its post and the throne of its dominion” (Evans’s trans., p. 116).



## NOTE 16, PAGE 135.

Frank, vol. i., p. 150 seq. : "That which was folly for the eye of the natural intellect is now intelligible, is comprehended by the spiritual I as 'wisdom among them that are perfect ;' not wisdom of this æon, but as wisdom of a higher order of life in which the I of regeneration stands, and which is quite as little an arbitrary and accidental one as that of the lower cosmical hemisphere. The I, however, has, as standard of the necessity and criterion of the wisdom in the order of the reality which it has experienced and which it knows in the form of the notion, nothing immediately but this reality itself, which by itself evidences itself to him as truth and necessity ; or since that reality is the I of regeneration itself, the new I is itself for itself guarantee of the truth, standard of the necessity, judge of the wisdom" (Evans's trans., p. 143 seq.).

## NOTE 17, PAGE 135.

Jonathan Edwards says, in his *Treatise on the Religious Affections* (Works, New York, 1830, vol. v., p. 172 seq.): "All gracious persons have a solid, full, thorough, and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the Gospel. . . . Their conviction is an effectual conviction ; so that the great, spiritual, mysterious, and invisible things of the Gospel, have the influence of real and certain things upon them ; they have the weight and power of real things in their hearts. . . . With respect to Christ's being the son of God and Saviour of the world, and the great things he has revealed concerning himself and his Father and another world, they have not only a predominating opinion that these things are true, and so yield their assent as they do in many other matters of doubtful speculation ; but they see that it is really so ; their eyes are opened, so that they see that really Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." Edwards's mysticism is described in *Lecture VII.*, p. 262 seq. It is to be regretted that, in spite of such passages as that just quoted, Edwards's prevailing conception of Christianity is that of a system of doctrines rather than of divine realities. Consequently, his "spiritual relish," or sense by which the Christian apprehends the things of religion, has truth rather than facts for its objects.



## NOTE 18, PAGE 136.

Works, as above, vol. i., p. 61. The passage occurs in Edwards's account of his conversion, the whole of which has its direct bearing upon the subject before us. It is one of the most beautiful descriptions of the genesis of the Christian life ever written.

## NOTE 19, PAGE 138.

The objection may be made to the description which I have given of the great change of conversion, that the picture is painted in colors too bright. In many cases there is no such decided transformation. The Christian life often begins in mere glimmerings of the dawn. It is, to take a scriptural figure, a bruised reed and smoking flax, which seem to have hardly the name of reality. Yet we cannot doubt that in such instances there is often a true beginning of the life in Christ, the dawning of a light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. I am not disposed to deny the great differences in the experience of Christians. Few may have such an experience as that of Edwards, referred to in the previous note. But I cannot but think that I have fairly represented the typical experience. And even in those cases where the transformation is less evident, I am inclined to think that it is in reality no less great and wonderful.

## NOTE 20, PAGE 139.

Frank, vol. i., p., 126 : "The I as object of the experience, and the I as subject of the same, are here so directly associated together that the I only needs to affirm itself in order to express the reality of the fact of the moral transformation" (Evans's trans., p. 121).

## NOTE 21, PAGE 139.

I have followed Frank in basing the evidence of Christian experience upon the great transformation wrought in regeneration and conversion. Dorner will not accept this position ; Frank, he says (*Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., p. 40), "has only a subjective principle of knowledge, but no objective one." "But thus," he adds, "the verification of the Christian contents and of the certainty concerning them still falls short of objectivity and is not raised above mere subjectivity." Dorner declares that regeneration is a matter of growth, and that it is justification alone that is



complete and perfected in its kind according to the Christian and especially the evangelical conception (*ibid.*). He says: "God must by logical necessity be the highest guarantee and source of all true certainty; our weak state of faith, our good subjective frame, is not our final source of certainty concerning God and Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 41). "There is an immediate knowledge of God, not merely an only secondary knowledge mediated by inferences from the effect to the cause" (*ibid.*). "We do not first become certain of God by being conscious of ourselves as regenerate and converted, but because we experience God in Christ as being for us, we know ourselves to be redeemed" (*ibid.*). Again he says: "Faith already has the immediate spiritual intuition of God as Father; it has knowledge not simply of itself, of its being redeemed, but also, and that primarily, of the redeeming God" (*ibid.*, p. 161). Under these circumstances it is not strange that Dorner reproaches Frank with underrating the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* (*ibid.*, p. 42. Cf. Eng. trans., vol. i., pp. 54-57, and p. 174).

There is undoubtedly a serious difference of principle between the two theologians. I began the preparation of these lectures holding the view of Dorner, as was natural for one who had been a student of this great theologian and for many years a reader of his books. But I have been brought, slowly but inevitably, by the study of my subject in the light of experience and Scripture, to the conclusion that Dorner is wrong and Frank right. In asserting that we have an immediate intuition of God, Dorner seems to me to cross the line that separates the true mysticism from the false. I do not see how we can know any objective reality, whether physical or spiritual, except through its effects in our consciousness. This knowledge is real and immediate, though not unmediated; but it is very different from a direct intuition of the object. Such subjectivity is essential to knowledge. It is the condition of all objectivity and does not in any way stand opposed to it.

I shall return to this point in a later lecture. Let me say here that the position I take is sustained by the teachings of the older theologians respecting the witness of the Spirit to the believer's adoption. They regard this not as an immediate communication of knowledge respecting the believer's relation to God, but as an attestation through the redemptive effects produced by the Spirit in the soul. See Baxter, Works, 1830, vol. xx., p. 49 seq. Ed.



wards, *Religious Affections*, Works, 1830, vol. v., p. 121 seq., and p. 314 seq. In the latter passage Edwards says: "The witness or seal of the Spirit consists in the effect of the Spirit of God in the heart, in the implantation and exercise of grace there, and so consists in experience. And it is beyond doubt that this seal of the Spirit is the highest kind of evidence of the saints' adoption that ever they obtain."

I cannot too strongly emphasize the importance of careful thought and study upon this point.

## NOTE 22, PAGE 141.

Watts's Works, Leeds, 1801, vol. i., p. 24.

## NOTE 23, PAGE 141.

Frank, vol. i., p. 325: "The Christian . . . who has experienced regeneration and appropriated it in conversion, is absolutely and without exception conscious that it is the opposite of natural development; and if before his conversion he may have supposed himself capable of effecting this transformation, yet as soon as conversion takes place the fact is present to his consciousness, that the result has neither proceeded from him nor could do so" (Evans's trans., p. 307).

## NOTE 24, PAGE 141.

Frank makes no use of the natural revelation of God. Accordingly, he is obliged to prove in his *System of Christian Certainty*, that the cause of regeneration and conversion is God, without being able to verify the fact by the natural knowledge of God. It seems to me that this is a grave defect, for unless a man already knows God, I do not see how he can recognize him as the cause at work in his conversion. Frank endeavors to show that the cause of regeneration is transcendent, absolute, and personal, all from the nature of the effects. It does not seem to me that he succeeds. See vol. i., p. 320 seq. (Evans's trans., p. 303 seq.)

## NOTE 25, PAGE 143.

Works, vol. xx., p. 136. Cf. Watts, Works, vol. i., p. 22: "The Gospel of Christ is like a seal or signet, of such inimitable and divine graving that no created power can counterfeit it; and when the Spirit of God has stamped this Gospel on the soul, there are so many holy and happy lines drawn or im-



pressed thereby ; so many sacred signatures and divine features stamped on the mind, that give certain evidence, both of a heavenly signet and a heavenly operator."

NOTE 26, PAGE 146.

Harris, Self-Revelation of God, p. 468 seq. : " By the influence of the Spirit we are brought into immediate connection with the Lord, as the rays of the sun falling on us bring us into immediate connection with the sun. In that influence the energy of redeeming grace strikes on our souls ; we are brought into contact with the heart of God and feel the throbbing of his love knocking evermore for a responsive love. Then, rejoicing in God, we rise up new witnesses from our own experience of the power of God to redeem from condemnation and sin. And through all the Christian ages every one who has had the like experience has become a witness to Christ revealed in his own consciousness by the Spirit of God."

NOTE 27, PAGE 147.

In the account of the Christian's knowledge of the Spirit, the Christ, and the Father given in the text, I have diverged somewhat widely from Frank, whose analysis of the trinitarian and christological elements in the Christian experience seems to me artificial and unsatisfactory (vol. i., p. 343 seq. Evans's trans., p. 324 seq.). Frank's method leads him to the attempt to analyze the Christian consciousness without the aid of the Scriptures, to which he refers only when he comes to the *transeunt* objects of faith. But I doubt whether it is possible to understand the Christian experience except through the aid of the objective Word, which interprets to us what otherwise would be very dark. The method I have followed is that with which the New-Testament furnishes us, and I think the results are fully verified by the experience of the Christian.

NOTE 28, PAGE 152.

Watts, Works, 1801, vol. i., p. 21. Ibid., p. 32 : " It is Christ Jesus living in the soul by the power of his own Spirit ; Christ Jesus, who is the eternal principle of life, and his Spirit which is the eternal Spirit ; and where he hath begun to dwell he shall forever inhabit." See also Frank, vol. i., p. 230 seq. (Evans's trans. p. 219 seq.) It is to be noted that this seal or witness of the Spirit extends not only to the future life, but also to the resurrection body.



## NOTE 29, PAGE 153.

As I have closed the lecture with a prayer, I cannot refrain from giving in this note that with which Baxter concludes the discourse on the Witness of the Spirit in his Unreasonableness of Infidelity (Works, 1830, vol. xx., p. 202): "Oh, that my dear Redeemer would pour out upon my soul a fuller measure of his Spirit, to enlighten and enliven me, and make me more conformable to his image and will, and to keep continual possession within me for himself; that I might always bear about me a living, effectual testimony of Christ in my breast, and may have yet more of this advantage against temptations, which I have here opened unto others: and whatsoever I have spoken mistakingly of this Spirit, or defectively and unworthily of its admirable, curious, and yet unsearchable works, the Lord of mercy forgive it, with the rest of my transgressions, in the blood of his Well-beloved!" Amen.

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## NOTES TO LECTURE V.

## NOTE 1, PAGE 154.

The plan chosen for the development of the experimental evidence, according to which the genesis of the proof is first treated, then its growth, and after that its scientific verification, necessarily involves some repetition. This, however, is more apparent than real, since the facts are treated from quite different points of view, and the advantages gained by the method here followed seem to me quite to outweigh the disadvantages.

## NOTE 2, PAGE 157.

Cf. Harris, *Philosophical Basis of Theism*, p. 355. See what is said of the difference between choice and determination.

## NOTE 3, PAGE 160.

Cf. *The Law of Love and Love as a Law*, by Mark Hopkins, 7th ed., p. 99 seq. President Hopkins has successfully vindicated the legitimacy of the true self-love, pp. 101 seq., 168 seq.

## NOTE 4, PAGE 166.

Watts, *Works*, 1801, vol. i., p. 31.



## NOTE 5, PAGE 167.

See Lecture IV., p. 140 seq.

## NOTE 6, PAGE 171.

Paradise Regained, Bk. I., l. 460-64.

## NOTE 7, PAGE 171.

The Way of Life, by Charles Hodge, p. 328 seq.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 171.

Lecture IV., p. 142 seq.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 173.

Works, 1830, vol. xx., p. 155.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 173.

"There is a knowing of the truth as it is in Jesus, as it is in a Christlike nature, as it is in that sweet, mild, humble and loving Spirit of Jesus, which spreads itself like a morning sun upon the souls of good men, full of light and life. It profits little to know Christ himself after the flesh; but he gives his Spirit to good men, that searcheth the deep things of God" (Dr. John Smith's Select Discourses, quoted by Barclay, *Apology*, New York, 1827, p. 24).

## NOTE 11, PAGE 173.

Faith "gives a particular experimental knowledge of Christ and acquaintance with him. It causes the soul to find all that is spoken of him in the Word, and his beauty there represented, to be abundantly true, makes it really taste of his sweetness, and by that possesses the heart more strongly with his love, persuading it of the truth of those things, not by reasons and arguments, but by an inexpressible kind of evidence that they only know that have it" (Archbishop Leighton, on First Peter, ch. i., v. 8).

## NOTE 12, PAGE 174.

Works, vol. xx., p. 155 seq.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 175.

See Lecture IV., Note 21. Dorner correctly describes the Christian consciousness respecting this point, but he does not give the correct and scientific analysis of it.



## NOTE 14, PAGE 178.

See Lecture IV., p. 147 seq.

## NOTE 15, PAGE 179.

Frank, vol. i., p. 439: "Viewed from the stand-point of church history, it would involve a contradiction of well-ascertained facts, if it were supposed that the statements of the trinitarian dogma were the simple result of faith turning to the Scripture and reproducing its testimonies respecting the divine nature of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. On the contrary, the formation of the dogma was accomplished in such a way that the self-expression of the faith which was originated by, and exists through, the actual influence of the tripersonal absolute God, recognized itself and proclaimed itself in the language of the Scripture respecting the divine nature as Father, Son, and Spirit. The one entered into a relation of reciprocity with the other, the one upheld and conditioned the other: the Christian subject learned to understand the contents of his experience by the help of the Scripture, and eagerly seized on the testimony of the same respecting the tripersonal God as congruent with his experience, and the Scripture in its utterances respecting the one personal God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, was understood, apprehended, and interpreted according to the standard of the inwardly constraining experience, which became conscious and clear regarding its contents by the aid of the Scripture." (Evans's trans., p. 415.)

## NOTE 16, PAGE 182.

Wordsworth's Excursion, Bk. I.

## NOTE 17, PAGE 183.

Nature and the Supernatural, p. 452.

## NOTE 18, PAGE 190.

Cf. Frank, vol. i., p. 85 seq. Evans's trans., p. 83 seq. Dörner, Syst. der christl. Glaubenslehre, p. 62 seq.

## NOTE 19, PAGE 191.

"The Christian believer tests his experience, his beliefs, and his interpretations of Scripture by the experience and thinking of all Christian people as disclosed in the hymns and liturgies, the confessions and creeds, the devotional and doctrinal literature, the



biographies and histories, which express the best thought and wisdom, the most devout worship, the truest Christian living of the past. He is thus able to test and broaden his own beliefs and his own interpretations of Scripture by the 'capitalized experience' of all Christian people" (Harris, *Self-Revelation of God*, p. 34 seq.).

NOTE 20, PAGE 193.

Dorner, vol. i., p. 59 : " So ist begreiflich, dass auf dem Gebiete der Religion auch für das wissenschaftliche Bewusstsein vom Inhalt der religiösen Erfahrungen ein weit höherer Grad von Gewissheit möglich ist, als auf dem des endlichen Erkennens." (Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 73.)

NOTE 21, PAGE 194.

The thoughtful, vigorous, and very interesting Merrick Lectures of Bishop Randolph S. Foster, on the Philosophy of Christian Experience, did not come into my hands until this book was nearly through the press, too late to give them the attention which they deserve.

I concluded the notes on the last lecture with a prayer of Baxter's. Let me here quote, as a fitting close to this lecture on the growth of the experimental evidence, a part of another prayer of the same profoundly spiritual theologian : " Thou hast mercifully given me the witness in myself ; not an unreasonable persuasion in my mind, but that renewed nature, those holy and heavenly desires and delights, which surely can come from none but thee. And oh, how much more have I perceived in many of thy servants than in myself ! Thou hast cast my lot among the souls whom Christ hath healed. I have daily conversed with those whom he hath raised from the dead." Also he prays to the Holy Spirit : " Be in me the resident witness of my Lord, the author of my prayers, the spirit of adoption, the seal of God, and the earnest of my inheritance. Let not my nights be so long, and my days so short, nor sin eclipse those beams which have often illuminated my soul. Without thee books are senseless scrawls, studies are dreams, learning is a glow-worm, and wit is but wantonness, impertinency, and folly. . . . Make me the more heavenly, by how much the faster I am hastening to heaven ; and let my last thoughts, words, and works on earth be likest to those which shall be my first in the state of glorious immortality, where the kingdom is delivered up



to the Father, and God will forever be all, and in all ; of whom and through whom and to whom are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen " (vol. xxi., p. 392 seq.).

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## NOTES TO LECTURE VI.

### NOTE 1, PAGE 199.

Quoted by Grau, *Der Beweis des Glaubens*, vol. i., p. 83.

### NOTE 2, PAGE 199.

Cf. Frank, *Syst. der christlichen Gewissheit*, 2d. ed., vol. i., p. 58 seq. Evans's trans., p. 57 seq. Dorner, *Syst. der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., p. 44 seq. Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 58 seq.

### NOTE 3, PAGE 200.

Even Locke, whose tendency is to minimize our certainty with respect to objective realities, admits that our "sensitive knowledge of particular existence" goes beyond "bare probability" (*Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. IV., ch. ii., sect. 14).

### NOTE 4, PAGE 200.

"The spirit by reflection upon the experience once made and preserved in the memory, or upon the intuition to which it has surrendered itself, forms an intellectual or mental image of the thing experienced, which can continue to exist even without the continuance of the contact and the subjective affection, and this process of reflection likewise, although now *mediate*, can participate in that original certainty" (Dorner, vol. i., p. 56). Dorner also says (p. 58): "While in the cognition of finite things immediate intuition or contact with the things cannot be renewed at every moment, because that would require their constant presence, the case is quite different with respect to the matter of religion. Since God is omnipresent, contact with him can be sought at every moment in prayer and contemplation, yea, it will always remain the truth that we live and move and have our being in him as the perennial omnipresent ground of our existence." (Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 70 seq., p. 73.)



## NOTE 5, PAGE 201.

Cardinal Newman clearly brings out the difference between real and notional knowledge in his Grammar of Assent. He says (Amer. ed., 1870, p. 18): "Apprehension . . . has two subject-matters, according as language expresses things external to us, or our own thoughts, so is apprehension real or notional. It is notional in the grammarian, it is real in the experimentalist. The grammarian has to determine the force of words and phrases; he has to master the structure of sentences and the composition of paragraphs; he has to compare language with language, to ascertain the common ideas expressed under different idiomatic forms, and to achieve the difficult work of recasting the mind of an original author in the mould of a translation. On the other hand, the philosopher or experimentalist aims at investigating, questioning, ascertaining facts, causes, effects, actions, qualities; these are things, and he makes his words distinctly subordinate to these, as means to an end."

The difference between real and notional knowledge is expressed by the Latin words *cognoscere* and *intelligere*. Cf. Neander, *Der heilige Bernhard* (Bibliothek theol. Klassiker), vol. i., p. 224.

## NOTE 6, PAGE 202.

Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, Introduction.

## NOTE 7, PAGE 202.

I am aware that there are some who will find fault with my use of the term probability. I employ it in its common meaning, as it stands opposed to certainty. This is the sense in which it is used by Butler in the passage quoted in the lecture. It is similarly defined by Locke (Essay, Bk. IV., ch. xv., sect. 4): "Probability, then, being to supply the defect of our knowledge, and to guide us where that fails, is always conversant about propositions whereof we have no certainty, but only some inducements to receive them for true." Of course for the agnostic who confines knowledge to the contents of consciousness all distinctions of certainty and probability respecting real existence will be meaningless.

There is a technical use of the term probability which has the sanction of good authority, but which produces confusion of thought when employed in ordinary scientific discussion. "The word *probable*," says Stewart (Elements, pt. II., ch. ii., sect. 4),



“does not imply any *deficiency* in the proof, but only marks the particular nature of that proof, as contra-distinguished from another species of evidence. It is opposed not to what is *certain*, but to what admits of being demonstrated after the *manner of the mathematicians*.” See Fleming’s Vocabulary of Philosophy, 4th ed., edited by Calderwood, New York, 1887, p. 322. Cf. Porter’s Human Intellect, p. 454 seq. If the term were to be used in this sense, all the evidence I am presenting would of course be probable.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 203.

“Die Gewissheit lässt keine Steigerung oder Minderung zu, sie ist eben die Ruhe des Geistes in der Wahrheit, von keiner Furcht des Irrthums bewegt” (Hettinger, Apologie des Christenthums, 1885, vol. i., pt. 2, p. 4). This, however, is true only of the certainty of the existence of the fact; there is a growing certainty respecting the nature and contents of the fact.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 203.

Cf. Porter’s Human Intellect, pp. 388–430. Frank, vol. i., pp. 73–85. (Evans’s trans., pp. 72–83.)

## NOTE 10, PAGE 207.

Novum Organum, Lib. I., Aphorisms xxxviii–lxviii: “De idolis et notionibus falsis, quæ mentes humanas obsident.” Lord Bacon’s Works, London, 1819, vol. viii., pp. 7–24.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 207.

Ibid., Lib. I., Aph. i: “Homo, naturæ minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit, quantum, de naturæ ordine, re vel mente observaverit; nec amplius scit, aut potest.” Works, vol. viii., p. 1.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 207.

Ibid., Lib. I., Aph. xxxvi: “Restat vero nobis modus tradendi unus et simplex, ut homines ad ipsa particularia et eorum series et ordines adducamus; et ut illi rursus imperent sibi ad tempus abnegationem notionum, et cum rebus ipsis consuescere incipiant.” Works, vol. viii., p. 7.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 207.

Ibid., Præfatio: “Consentaneum (ut videtur) existimantes, hoc ipsum (videlicet utrum aliquid sciri possit) non disputare sed experiri.” Works, vol. viii., p. xi.



## NOTE 14, PAGE 208.

Philosophical Basis of Theism, p. 65 seq.

## NOTE 15, PAGE 208.

Harris, *Self-Revelation of God*, p. 30: "We are said to know in experience whatever is known in presentative intuition; it may be either the mind itself in its several acts and states, or some reality which is not self. Whatever reality has come under our immediate observation is said to be known in experience. In other words, we know in experience whatever is or has been presented in consciousness. What is known in experience may be also said to be known in consciousness."

## NOTE 16, PAGE 209.

"For divinity is something rather to be understood by a spiritual sensation than by any verbal description, as all things of sense and life are best known by sentient and vital faculties; as the Greek philosopher hath well observed, everything is best known by that which bears a just resemblance and analogy with it; and therefore the Scripture is wont to set forth a good life as the prolepsis and fundamental principle of divine science" (Dr. John Smith, *Select Discourses*, quoted by Tulloch, *Rational Theology in England in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. ii., p. 142).

## NOTE 17, PAGE 211.

It will be objected that the sanctities of Christianity must be approached in a different spirit and an altogether different way from that in which the scientific man enters upon the experimental investigation of facts. This is perfectly true, and I cannot conceive of the case of a man investigating Christianity from a purely intellectual interest. In the moral and spiritual sphere there must be moral and spiritual motives. Nevertheless, it seems to me, that when the conditions peculiar to the subject-matter are observed, the procedure of the man who puts the Christian claim to the test is truly scientific.

## NOTE 18, PAGE 212.

*The Principles of Science*, vol. i., p. 271.



## NOTE 19, PAGE 212.

Frank, vol. i., p. 143: "We distinguish thus the certainty as a beginning, resting in itself and not leading back to a higher principle of knowledge, from that certainty which starting from this beginning possesses itself of the complex of the Christian truth; and consequently also the certainty which has respect to the fact of the Christian moral transformation of life, from the certainty which in general results therefrom for the Christian. In the first instance we have absolute identity of subject and object,  $I=I$ , self-assertion and self-affirmation of the  $I$ , namely, of that which has arisen in regeneration, and the certainty resting in itself has in this equalization of both its support and its limit." (Evans's trans., p. 137.)

## NOTE 20, PAGE 212.

Lecture IV., p. 131 seq.

## NOTE 21, PAGE 212.

See Lecture IV., Note 2.

## NOTE 22, PAGE 214.

Cf. Pfeiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, 2d ed., vol. ii., p. 276 seq.—a very interesting and instructive passage

## NOTE 23, PAGE 215.

Self-Revelation of God, p. 39.

## NOTE 24, PAGE 215.

*Ibid.*, p. 32.

## NOTE 25, PAGE 217.

Cf. Julius Müller, *Dogmatische Abhandlungen*, p. 127 seq.: "Das Verhältniss zwischen der Wirksamkeit des heiligen Geistes und dem Gnadenmittel des göttlichen Wortes." In this treatise Müller shows that the Reformed doctrine that the influence of the Holy Spirit in conversion attends or accompanies and gives effect to the Word, is truer to Scripture and fact than the Lutheran doctrine (which he proves not to be the original Lutheran doctrine but to be peculiar to the theologians of the seventeenth century), that the Spirit is immanent in the Word. He makes it plain that the main point, namely, that the work of the Spirit is in all ordinary cases mediated by the Word, is held in common by the two communions, and that this from the first has differentiated them from



the spiritualists or enthusiasts on the one side, and the rationalists and Romanists on the other.

NOTE 26, PAGE 218.

It is needless, so far as our argument is concerned, to insist that God has access to the soul directly, without passing along the avenues of sense. This may be so, or it may not. The important point for us is not *how* God enters the soul, but *that* he enters it. It is not a question as to whether the spiritual world opens to us in this way or that, but whether it opens to us at all. As I have said in the lecture, we have no communion with our fellow-men apart from sense, but in this case sense does not separate but unites. Why should it not be so in the case of God? I am anxious not to complicate, and perhaps imperil, my argument by suspending it upon any philosophical theory of cognition.

NOTE 27, PAGE 218.

Cf. Rothe, *Zur Dogmatik*, 1863, p. 64 seq. *Der Beweis des Glaubens* vol. ii., p. 128. Frank, vol. ii., p. 2.

NOTE 28, PAGE 218.

Berkeley, *Minute Philosopher*, Works, London, 1843, vol. i., p. 386 seq.: "*Euph.* By the person Alciphron is meant an individual thinking thing, and not the hair, skin, or visible surface, or any part of the outward form, color, or shape of Alciphron. *Alc.* This I grant. *Euph.* And in granting this, you grant that in a strict sense I do not see Alciphron, *i.e.*, that individual thinking thing, but only such visible signs and tokens as suggest and infer the being of that invisible thinking principle or soul. Even so, in the self-same manner, it seems to me, that though I cannot with eyes of flesh behold the invisible God, yet I do in the strictest sense behold and perceive by all my senses such signs and tokens, such effects and operations, as suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invisible God, as certainly and with the same evidence, at least, as any other signs, perceived by sense, do suggest to me the existence of your soul, spirit, or thinking principle; which I am convinced of only by a few signs or effects, and the motions of one small organized body: whereas I do at all times, and in all places, perceive sensible signs which evince the being of God." Of course Berkeley is referring here only to the natural, and not to the Christian,



knowledge of God, and he does not take into account the spiritual signs by which God's presence is announced.

NOTE 29, PAGE 221.

On the Holy Spirit, Works, 1852, vol. iii., p. 260.

NOTE 30, PAGE 221.

The theologians who have presented the experimental evidence, from the days of Calvin downward, have commonly represented it as authenticating the Christian system of doctrine, rather than as proving the immediate presence in the soul of the Christian realities. According to this view, the Spirit so illuminates the soul of the Christian that he perceives the truth of the Christian revelation (or what is the same, of the Bible) and gives his assent to it—which perception and assent are often represented as constituting divine and saving faith. Baxter and Watts both rise above this view, and in a number of passages show that they regard the experimental evidence as involving a proof and knowledge of God's redemptive presence, as Father, Christ, and Spirit, in the new life. Edwards, in his Treatise on the Religious Affections, remains for the most part involved in the old view. The modern German theologians, especially Frank, represent Christian experience as involving a knowledge of the facts primarily, and only secondarily of the doctrines.

I have not hesitated, as the foregoing lectures show, to range myself with those who regard the illumination of the Christian as furnishing proof and knowledge of the Christian realities. This view seems to me to correspond with the teachings of Scripture and to be confirmed by experience. It is, indeed, difficult to see how, except in some way inconsistent with the ordinary operations of the human faculties, the mind could be assured of truths without having a knowledge of the facts for which those truths stand. When the facts are known first, then the truths are readily accepted. The Christian does not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, with the infallible assent of the *fides divina*, because that doctrine has been in some mysterious way made evident to him by the Holy Spirit, but because the teachings of the Bible respecting the Father, Son, and Spirit have been infallibly confirmed by the actual presence and manifestation of the sacred Three in the experience of the Christian life.



## NOTE 31, PAGE 222.

The statement in the lecture is not to be construed as casting any doubt upon the true and complete personality of the Holy Spirit, a fact which is unquestionably taught in the Scripture and confirmed by the believer's experience. All that is meant is that his personality is not the characteristic that comes first and most distinctly to light.

## NOTE 32, PAGE 228.

Cf. Dorner, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, p. 176.

## NOTES TO LECTURE VII.

## NOTE 1, PAGE 232.

Peip, *Die Gränzen des Beweises*, in *Der Beweis des Glaubens*, vol. ii., p. 111. Strictly speaking, the second class would include other kinds of unbelieving philosophy besides materialism.

## NOTE 2, PAGE 233.

*First Principles*, Amer. ed., p. 46.

Christianity does not deny the element of truth in agnosticism. It does not lay claim to an absolute knowledge. It admits that we cannot know the Almighty to perfection, and gladly confesses with the author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, whose positive faith it shares: "Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High; whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of his name; yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know him not as indeed he is, neither can know him; and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confess without confession that his glory is inexplicable, his greatness above our capacity and reach. He is above and we upon earth; therefore it behoveth our words to be wary and few" (Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.*, I., 2, sect. 3). But this true Christian agnosticism is not inconsistent with much definite and well verified knowledge.

## NOTE 3, PAGE 233.

Spencer's object in his philosophy is to "interpret the detailed phenomena of Life, and Mind, and Society, in terms of Matter.



Motion, and Force" (First Principles, Amer. ed., p. 556. Cf. Biology, Amer. ed., vol. i., p. 464, and pp. 473, 474).

## NOTE 4, PAGE 234.

Albert Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*.

## NOTE 5, PAGE 234.

Goethe's *Faust*, Zweiter Theil.

## NOTE 6, PAGE 235.

It is not needful that agnosticism should bear the materialistic character it has in the philosophy of Spencer. When it has been granted that causes or *noumena* are unknowable, the question is still open, which of the various phenomena are to be taken as fundamental. Why should the lowest phenomena, namely, matter, motion, and force, be made to furnish the explanation of the rest? Kant's agnosticism, by its admission of the full right of the ideal element, stands upon a much higher level than that of Spencer. That of Sir William Hamilton and Mansel, in spite of its lack of self-consistency (or perhaps we might say, because of it) stands higher than either, inasmuch as it finds a place for revelation.

## NOTE 7, PAGE 236.

Frank, *Syst. der christl. Gewissheit*, 2d edition, vol. i., p. 59. Evans's trans., p. 58.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 238.

Newman, *Grammar of Assent*, New York, 1870, p. 231. Newman also quotes (p. 403 seq.) from Aristotle's *Ethics* the following passage: "Young men come to be mathematicians and the like, but they cannot possess practical judgment; for this talent is employed upon individual facts, and these are learned only by experience; and a youth has not experience, for experience is only gained by a course of years. And so, again, it would appear that a boy may be a mathematician, but not a philosopher, or learned in physics, and for this reason, because one study deals with abstractions, while the other studies gain their principles from experience, and in the latter subjects youths do not give assent, but make assertions, but in the former they know what it is that they are handling." *Eth. Nicom.*, vi. 8. Bohn's trans., p. 164.



## NOTE 9, PAGE 239.

Apology, ch. xvii.: "O testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ!"

## NOTE 10, PAGE 240.

Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 328. Aristotle, Eth. Nicom., vi., 11, fin. Bohn's trans., p. 170.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 241.

Works, 1830, vol. xx., p. 172. Cf. Ueberweg's Logic, Lindsay's trans., p. 547 seq. Watts says (Works, 1801, vol. i., p. 23): "It is true, indeed, this is a testimony that cannot be communicated to others, in the same manner and measure that it is felt by the persons that believe. In this respect it is like the hidden manna, which none knows but they that taste of it; yet those that feed upon it daily will discover it in some outward appearances."

Owen says (Works, 1852, vol. iv., p. 95): "But yet, although this testimony be privately received (for in itself it is not so, but common unto all believers), it is ministerially pleadable in the church as a principal motive unto believing. A declaration of the divine power which some have found by experience in the Word is an ordinance of God to convince others and to bring them unto faith; yea, of all the external arguments that are or may be pleaded to justify the divine authority of the Scripture, there is none more prevalent nor cogent than this of its mighty efficacy in all ages on the souls of men, to change, convert, and renew them into the image and likeness of God, which hath been visible and manifest."

## NOTE 12, PAGE 241.

Der Beweis des Glaubens, vol. ii., p. 112: Peip, Die Gränzen des Beweises—"allgemeingültig, wenn auch nicht allgemein geltend." Cf. Klaiber on the Test. Spir. Sanct. in the Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie, vol. ii., p. 35: "Als ein Produkt der persönlichen Lebenserfahrung ist das in Rede stehende Argument allerdings nur ein subjectiver Beweis, aber ein für das Subject *schlecht-hin gültiger*, und für das Subject von *allgemeiner Gültigkeit*. Denn es beruht auf einer Erfahrung, welche ein Jeder machen *kann* und *soll*, welche zu machen ein Jeder durch seine ethische Natur aufgefodert wird."



## NOTE 13, PAGE 242.

Novum Organum, Lib. I., Aph. lxviii. : "Ut non alius fere sit aditus ad regnum hominis, quod fundatur in scientiis, quam ad regnum cœlorum ; *in quod, nisi sub persona infantis, intrare non datur.*" Works, 1819, vol. viii., p. 24. Cf. Valerius Terminus of the Interpretation of Nature, ch. i. : "Nay, it is a point fit and necessary in the front and beginning of this work, without hesitation or reservation to be professed, that it is no less true in this human kingdom of knowledge than in God's kingdom of heaven, that no man shall enter into it *except he become first as a little child.*" Ibid., vol. ii., p. 135.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 242.

Ueberweg, Logic, Lindsay's trans., p. 514.

## NOTE 15, PAGE 243.

"The knowing spirit can attain to certainty in a twofold way—in the way of *knowledge* and in the way of *faith*. If one has attained certainty by one's own intellectual effort, he does not believe, he *knows* it. But if one has attained certainty by the credible testimony of others who know, then he does not know it, he *believes* it" (Hettinger, Apologie des Christenthums, vol. i., pt. 2, p. 4). This is a well-known and highly valued Roman Catholic work on apologetics.

## NOTE 16, PAGE 244.

Kant's Werke, ed. Hartenstein, 1867, vol. v., p. 141 (Watson's Selections from Kant, p. 300).

## NOTE 17, PAGE 246.

Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Bk. IV., ch. xv., sect. 5.

## NOTE 18, PAGE 247.

Commentary on First Peter, ch. i., vv. 18, 19.

## NOTE 19, PAGE 248.

On the relative necessity of the opposition to Christianity on the part of the unregenerate man, see Frank, vol. i., p. 157 seq. He says (p. 159 seq.) : "The fundamental contradiction to the Christian truth rests immediately upon the incongruity between



the natural experience and knowledge of the subject and the spiritual realities with which the assuring of the Christian is concerned. Clothed in the dress of human thought and human language, those spiritual realities, in so far as this is the case, admit also of an experience and knowledge of a natural kind, which, however, on account of the fundamental incongruity between object and subject which remains, necessarily offends against the natural-moral certainty already present, and so calls forth the contradiction of the latter" (Evans's trans., p. 152).

## NOTE 20, PAGE 249.

Cowper, by Goldwin Smith, p. 5. English Men of Letters Series.

## NOTE 21, PAGE 253.

Religionsphilosophie, 2d ed., vol. ii., p. 629.

## NOTE 22, PAGE 254.

De Carne Christi, c. v. : "And the Son of God died ; it is by all means to be believed, because it is absurd. And he was buried and rose again ; the fact is certain, because it is impossible."

## NOTE 23, PAGE 254.

Baxter ( vol. xx., p. 170) gives the following objection and answer :

"*Obj.* What kind of a doctrine is that, that a reasonable man cannot believe ? It seems, then, it wanteth evidence of its truth.

"*Ans.* It wanteth not evidence suitable to its nature, and to an enlightened understanding, or to sound reason ; but its evidence is not of itself sufficient to the carnal mind : not because it wanteth due evidence, but because reason is wanting to that mind ; for reasonable, carnal men are not reasonable, as to the exercise, in these spiritual things. . . . How foolish was Aristotle himself, and all his brethren, about matters of his own salvation, for all the strength of his reason in natural things."

## NOTE 24, PAGE 255.

Julius Müller quotes with approval the words of Steffens (Christliche Religionsphilosophie, pt. 1, p. 12.) : "The union of Faith with all the formative forces of the age, so far as these are true and contain living germs of the future, constitutes *Phä*



*osophy*, properly so called. The affections can only be at rest when religion is the standard and measure of all truth, and religion receives its final solution when unchanged as to its inner truth—for it is indeed unchangeable and independent of all the vicissitudes of time—it takes up into itself all wisdom and all life.” *Christliche Lehre von der Sünde*, 5th ed., vol. i., p. 27 seq. (Urwick’s transl., vol. i., p. 25).

## NOTE 25, PAGE 255.

Cowper, *The Task*.

## NOTE 26, PAGE 255.

Cf. Henry B. Smith, *Faith and Philosophy*, p. 297 seq.: Hamilton’s *Theory of Knowledge*.

## NOTE 27, PAGE 256.

“It is not to be forgotten that to-day the most serious dangers threaten religious faith from the side of natural science—dangers which assuredly will not be averted by being ignored, while it is thought possible to rescue faith in the realm of ideal feeling and to leave the realm of reality to unbelief” (O. Pfeiderer, *Jahrb. für prot. Theologie*, vol. xv., p. 45).

## NOTE 28, PAGE 256.

Watts, vol. i., p. 24: “Though this inward evidence of the truth of Christianity be of a spiritual nature, and spring from pious experience, yet it is a very rational evidence also, and may be made out and justified to the strictest reason. It is no vain, fanciful, and enthusiastic business; for while every believer feels the argument working strong in his heart and soul, he finds also the convincing force of it upon his understanding: while he feels his inward powers sweetly inclined to virtue and holiness, which by nature had strong inclination to sensuality and sin, and knows that this was wrought in him purely by the Gospel of Christ; he cannot but infer that must be a divine principle which has such divine effects.”

## NOTE 29, PAGE 259.

Newman Smyth, *The Religious Feeling*, p. 18.

## NOTE 30, PAGE 259.

*Ibid.*, p. 34.



Ibid., p. 107.      NOTE 31, PAGE 259.

NOTE 32, PAGE 261.  
Cf. Harris, *Self-Revelation of God*, pp. 89-95 ; p. 114 seq.

NOTE 33, PAGE 263.  
Works, New York, 1830, vol. v., p. 102 seq. Cf. Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics*, vol. i., p. 134: "President Edwards, in his *Treatise on the Affections*, appears to me to approach the error of those mystics, in endeavoring to make it appear that regeneration imparts a new power rather than a new disposition to the mind. Such a doctrine cuts off the common ground between the individual Christian and other men."

Vol. xx., p. 166.      NOTE 34, PAGE 267.

Ibid.      NOTE 35, PAGE 268.

## NOTES TO LECTURE VIII.

NOTE 1, PAGE 270.  
Cf. Frank, *Syst. der christl. Gewissheit*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 273 seq. Evans's trans., p. 259 seq. Frank states the rationalistic objections with great completeness and insight.

NOTE 2, PAGE 271.  
See Lecture VII., Note 19.

NOTE 3, PAGE 272.  
Ueberweg's *Logic*, Lindsay's trans., p. 511.

NOTE 4, PAGE 273.  
*Die Religion innerhalb, etc.*, was first published in 1794.

NOTE 5, PAGE 273.  
Cf. Müller, *Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde*, 5th ed., vol. i., p. 466 seq.; vol. ii., p. 109.



## NOTE 6, PAGE 274.

Spinoza says (Ep. XXI., vol. iii., p. 195, Leipsic, 1846, quoted by Farrar, *Crit. Hist. of Free Thought*, p. 110), "Dico ad salutem non esse omnino necesse, Christum secundum carnem noscere; sed de æterno illo filio Dei, hoc est, Dei æterna sapientia quæ sese in omnibus rebus, et maxime in mente humana, et omnium maxime in Christo Jesu manifestavit, longe aliter sentiendum."

## NOTE 7, PAGE 274.

Cf. Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, 2d ed., vol. ii., p. 472 seq.: "According to Kant the only essential object of saving faith is the ideal Christ, *i.e.*, the ideal of humanity well-pleasing to God; but while the origin and the verification of this idea are to be found in the human reason itself, it finds its illustration in a historical personality like Jesus, whose moral power so successfully preserved itself under all opposition that we can consider him as an example of the idea of moral perfection, whether he wholly corresponds in reality to the same or not—a point with respect to which nothing certain can ever be maintained."

## NOTE 8, PAGE 274.

For a good account of Kant's doctrine, see Pfleiderer, vol. i., p. 144 seq.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 274.

For Ritschl's theology, see his *Christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, 1st ed., 1870-74, 2d ed., 1882-83. A third edition is now in process of publication. Ritschl's views are presented systematically in the third volume. In his *Theologie und Metaphysik*, 1st ed., 1881, 2d ed., 1887, he replies to the strictures of his opponents, especially Luthardt, Frank, and Hermann Weiss. An interesting popular exposition of Ritschl's theology is the *Darstellung und Beurtheilung der Theologie* Albrecht Ritschl's by Julius Thikötter, 2d ed., 1887. On the other side, see the acute and elaborate refutation of Ritschl by Stählin, — Kant, Lotze, Albrecht Ritschl, 1888. Translated into English.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 275.

*Theologie und Metaphysik*, 2d ed., p. 32 seq.



## NOTE 11, PAGE 275.

Ibid., pp. 20, 37.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 277.

Ibid., p. 31.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 277.

Ibid., p. 51. Cf. p. 48 seq.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 277.

W. Herrmann, *Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott*, 1886. See p. 26 seq.: "God gives us knowledge of himself through a fact, on account of which we can believe on him. . . . The existence [*i.e.*, the historical existence] of Jesus in our world is the fact through which God so comes into contact with us that he enters into communion with us." Cf. Herrmann's pamphlet, *Die Gewissheit des Glaubens und die Freiheit der Theologie*, 1887. He says (p. 30): "But if the reality of God becomes certain to us only under the impression of the person of Jesus, God enters thereby into communion with us. What Jesus works in us becomes to us a work of God. By bringing God into our sphere of knowledge through his historical appearance, he himself becomes the manifestation by which God comes near to us. The contents of the Word by which God communes with us is Jesus Christ. Thus it is all-important that we understand this Word and be inwardly strengthened by it. Only by such understanding do we have communion with God."

## NOTE 15, PAGE 277.

Cf. *The Expositor*, January, 1889, p. 42 seq.: *The Deep Gulf between the Old Theology and the New*, by Franz Delitzsch, D.D., — *A Last Confession of Faith*: "With regard to the real personal intercourse with the living God and the revealed Son of God and man," says Delitzsch (p. 47), "the new dogmatic school views this as a mystic illusion opposed to experience."

## NOTE 16, PAGE 277.

See the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, August 10, 1889, article by Lobstein on Kaftan's *Wahrheit der christlichen Religion*. The "Grundgedanke" of this able Ritschlian book is said to be: "Nicht das theoretische Erkennen, sondern nur ein praktischer



Glaube ist im Stande, die letzten Fragen nach Ursache und Zweck der Welt zu beantworten."

## NOTE 17, PAGE 278.

See Lecture VII., p. 244 seq.

## NOTE 18, PAGE 279.

For some good remarks on the "doppelte Wahrheit" of the Neo-Kantians and Ritschlians, see Pfeleiderer, vol. i., p. 516 seq. He speaks of "die Sophistik des zweifachen, halbskeptischen und halbgläubigen Neu-Kantianismus."

## NOTE 19, PAGE 281.

On the subject of the *Vorstellung* and its relation to perception on the one side, and thought on the other, see Biedermann's *Christliche Dogmatik*, 2d ed., vol. i., pp. 104-173.

## NOTE 20, PAGE 282.

Cf. Strauss, *Leben Jesu*, vol. ii., p. 709 seq. (4th ed., 1840). Also Hettinger, *Apologie des Christenthums*, vol. ii., pt. 2, p. 476 seq.

## NOTE 21, PAGE 282.

*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*. Works, 1840, vols. xi. and xii.

## NOTE 22, PAGE 282.

*Christliche Dogmatik*, 2d ed., 1884.

## NOTE 23, PAGE 282.

*Religionsphilosophie*, 2d ed., 1883-84.

## NOTE 24, PAGE 282.

Cf. Biedermann, vol. ii., p. 600 seq.

## NOTE 25, PAGE 285.

On the general subject of the pantheistic objections to the Christian experience, consult Frank, vol. i., pp. 393-510 (Evans's trans., pp. 371-482).

## NOTE 26, PAGE 287.

Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics*, 2d ed., London, 1860, vol. i., pp. 17, 19. Edward Dowden, in an article in the *Fortnightly Re-*



*view*, January, 1890, entitled "An Eighteenth Century Mystic," speaks of Vaughan's book as an "interesting, but slender study of a great subject." On this point I am not capable of venturing an opinion. I can only say that I have read the book with great delight and profit.

NOTE 27, PAGE 287.

*Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 26.

NOTE 28, PAGE 288.

Systematic Theology, vol. i., p. 64. Cf. Pfleiderer's definition, vol. ii., p. 633.

NOTE 29, PAGE 289.

Coleridge says (*Aids to Reflection*, Works, New York, 1853, vol. i., p. 156), "One feature common to the whole group" of fanatics is "the pretence, namely, of possessing, or a belief and expectation grounded on other men's assurances of their possessing, an immediate consciousness, a sensible experience, of the Spirit in and during its operation on the soul. It is not enough that you grant them a consciousness of the gifts and graces infused, or an assurance of the spiritual origin of the same, grounded on their correspondence to the Scripture promises, and their conformity with the idea of the divine Giver. No! they all alike, it will be found, lay claim (or at least look forward) to an inward perception of the Spirit itself and of its operating."

NOTE 30, PAGE 290.

Systematic Theology, vol. i., pp. 63, 67 seq.

NOTE 31, PAGE 292.

Apology of True Christian Divinity, New York, 1827, p. 26. The Apology was first published in 1676 in Latin, and in 1678 in English.

NOTE 32, PAGE 293.

*Ibid.*, p. 67.

NOTE 33, PAGE 293.

Hettinger, a Roman Catholic, says, speaking of the Protestant doctrine of the inward testimony of the Spirit (*Fundamental-Theologie*, 1879, vol. i., p. 206): "If it is an inward revelation of the Holy Ghost through which the outward revelation is known to be divine, then it is not the revelation but rather this inward witness



of the Holy Spirit that is the final criterion and highest principle of all supernatural truth and certainty. But thereby fanaticism is conceded to be in the right, as the Quakers were able to show," and he quotes from Barclay. But this inward "revelation" has been mediated by the objective Word and corresponds to it. It is in a true sense subordinate to the Word.

## NOTE 34, PAGE 293.

See Owen, Works, 1852, vol. iv., p. 59 seq. : "Some are ready to apprehend that this retreat into a Spirit of revelation is but a pretence to discard all rational arguments and to introduce enthusiasm into their room. Now, although the charge be grievous, yet because it is groundless, we must not forego what the Scripture plainly affirms and instructs us in, thereby to avoid it." The whole passage is most instructive.

## NOTE 35, PAGE 294.

Systematic Theology, vol. i., p. 15 seq.

## NOTE 36, PAGE 294.

Faith and Philosophy, p. 36 seq.

## NOTE 37, PAGE 295.

Dorner, Christliche Glaubenslehre, vol. i., p. 160 : "According to Schleiermacher, Christianity consists in the feeling or consciousness of redemption."

## NOTE 38, PAGE 295.

Reden über die Religion an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern, first published in 1799. Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche, 1821-22. An excellent account of Schleiermacher's system is given by Pfeiderer, vol. i., pp. 290-328.

## NOTE 39, PAGE 297.

Systematic Theology, vol. i., p. 15 seq.

## NOTE 40, PAGE 297.

Introduction to Christian Theology, p. 61.

## NOTE 41, PAGE 299.

Lecture IV., p. 116 seq. Lecture VII., p. 263 seq.



## NOTE 42, PAGE 299.

Cf. Lecture IV., Note 21.

## NOTE 43, PAGE 300.

See ante, p. 289.

## NOTE 44, PAGE 300.

Cf. Lecture VI., Note 27.

## NOTE 45, PAGE 302.

See Lecture V., p. 192 seq. Watts says of the experimental evidence (vol. i., p. 32): "It may be darkened indeed, it may be hidden for a season; sometimes the violent temptations of the evil one may, as it were, stop the mouth of this divine witness; and sometimes defiling lusts, rising upon the face of the soul, may darken these evidences, but can never entirely blot them out."

## NOTE 46, PAGE 302.

Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie, 1857, vol. ii., pp. 1-53: Die Lehre der altprotestantischen Dogmatiker von dem *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, und ihre dogmatische Bedeutung, by Klaiber. Cf. Ladd, Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, vol. ii., p. 584 seq. Also Short on the Witness of the Spirit, Bampton Lectures for 1842.

## NOTE 47, PAGE 303.

Lecture I., Note 14.

## NOTE 48, PAGE 303.

The following definition of the doctrine is taken from the Lutheran theologian Hollaz (Exam. Theolog. Acromat. De Script., p. 83, quoted by Luthardt, Kompendium der Dogmatik, 7th ed., p. 314): "*Testimonium Spiritus sancti internum, i.e., actus supernaturalis Spiritus sancti, per verbum Dei attente lectum vel auditu perceptum, virtute sua divina Scripturæ sacræ communicata, cor hominis pulsantis, aperientis, illuminantis, et obsequium fidei flectentis, ut homo illuminatus ex internis motibus spiritualibus vere sentiat, verbum sibi propositum a Deo ipso esse profectum, atque adeo immotum ipsi assensum præbeat.*"

Cf. Strauss, Glaubenslehre, vol. i., p. 134 seq. Strauss calls this doctrine "the Achilles-heel of the Protestant system," because, as he declares, it logically leads either to fanaticism or ration-



alism. A very clear account of the Roman Catholic position is given by Hettinger, *Apologie des Christenthums*, 6th ed., vol. ii., pt. 2, p. 426 seq.

NOTE 49, PAGE 304.

Lecture VI., Note 30.

NOTE 50, PAGE 304.

See Drey, *Apologetik*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 349: "Undeniable as is the convincing power of the inward personal experience, yet this test of truth cannot be counted as one of the proper evidences of revelation, since the means of proof must be something objective or at least universally communicable, which a mere feeling, an inward experience of the soul is not." Drey is one of the most eminent Roman Catholic apologetes. Kaftan, a follower of Ritschl, and Dorner's successor in the university of Berlin, uses similar language, though denying the experience himself (*Wahrheit der christlichen Religion*, 1889, p. 239): "The proof of the truth of the Christian faith by experience regarded as a scientific principle does not stand the test. . . . The objects" of the experience "do not compel assent."

NOTE 51, PAGE 304.

Lecture VII., p. 236 seq.

NOTE 52, PAGE 308.

Fleming's *Vocabulary of Philosophy*, 4th ed., revised by Calderwood, New York, 1887, p. 140.

## NOTES TO LECTURE IX.

NOTE 1, PAGE 310.

See Butler's *Analogy*, pt. 2, ch. vii. (Malcom's ed., Philadelphia, 1866, p. 263 seq.): "Thus the evidence of Christianity will be a long series of things, reaching, as it seems, from the beginning of the world to the present time, of great variety and compass, taking in both the direct, and also the collateral, proofs, and making up, all of them together, one argument. The conviction arising from this kind of proof may be compared to what they



call the *effect*, in architecture or other works of art ; a result from a great number of things, so and so disposed, and taken into one view."

NOTE 2, PAGE 311.

Works, 1830, vol. xx., p. 178.

NOTE 3, PAGE 311.

Cf. Watts, Works, 1801, vol. i., p. 30: "Though there are many and sufficient arguments drawn from criticism, history, and human learning, to prove the sacred authority of the Bible, and such as may give abundant evidence to an honest inquirer, and full satisfaction that it is the Word of God ; yet this is the chief evidence that the greatest part of Christians can ever attain of the divine original of the holy Scripture itself, as well as the truth of the doctrine contained in it, viz. : That they have found such a holy and heavenly change passed upon them by reading or hearing the propositions, the histories, the promises, the precepts, and the threatenings of this book."

NOTE 4, PAGE 313.

Cf. Owen, The Reason of Faith, chap. iv.—"Moral Certainty, the Result of External Arguments, Insufficient." Works, 1852, vol. iv., p. 50: "These arguments are all human and fallible. Exalt them into the greatest esteem possible, yet because they are not demonstrations, nor do necessarily beget a certain knowledge in us (which indeed if they did, there were no room left for faith or our obedience therein), they produce an opinion only, though in the highest kind of probability, and firm against objections ; for we will allow the utmost assurance that can be claimed upon them. But this is exclusive of all divine faith, as to any article, thing, matter, or object to be believed."

NOTE 5, PAGE 313.

Lecture I., p. 27 seq.

NOTE 6, PAGE 313.

Lecture IV., p. 116 seq. Lecture VII., p. 263 seq.

NOTE 7, PAGE 317.

Cf. Christlieb, Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, transl. by Weitbrecht and edited by Kingsbury, Amer. ed., 1874, p. 517 seq.



## NOTE 8, PAGE 317.

Ladd, *The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture*, vol. i., p. 531.

## NOTE 9, PAGE 318.

Lecture VIII., p. 302 seq.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 319.

Watts, vol. i., p. 27 : "It is such a witness to the truth of the Christian religion, as does not depend upon the exact truth of letters and syllables, nor on the critical knowledge of the copies of the Bible, nor on this old manuscript, or on the other new translation. . . . The humble and sincere Christian has learned so much of the same Gospel, in which all copies agree, as has renewed his sinful nature, and wrought a divine life in him, and therefore he is sure the substance of this Gospel must be from God. Nay, if this property of the inward witness be duly considered a little further in the nature and attendants of it, we shall find that every true Christian has a sufficient argument and evidence to support his faith, without being able to prove the authority of any of the canonical writings. He may hold fast his religion, and be assured that it is divine, though he cannot bring any learned proof that the book that contains it is divine too ; nay, though the book itself should ever happen to be lost or destroyed."

## NOTE 11, PAGE 319.

Dogmatik, p. 92, quoted by Luthardt, *Komp. der Dogmatik*, 7th ed., p. 319 : "I must candidly confess, that firmly convinced though I am of the truth of revelation, I have never in my life experienced such a testimony of the Holy Spirit, and find no word about it in the Bible, for John vii. 17, 1 John v. 6, prove nothing." Cf. Klaiber, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie*, vol. ii., p. 7 seq.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 319.

I heartily sympathize with all legitimate investigations by Christian scholars in the line of the "higher criticism." Such investigations cannot but be of advantage to the Christian church, and we ought not to complain that the result in some instances is to make us greatly modify our previously accepted theories of the constitution of the Bible. But when Christian scholars accept in



bulk the unproved, or only partially proved theories of unbelieving critics, theories based upon naturalistic assumptions, we have a right to enter our protest.

NOTE 13, PAGE 321.

With respect to the oppositions of unbelief, Watts uses language that has not yet lost its force (vol. i., p. 29): "If we consider what bold assaults are sometimes made upon the faith of the unlearned Christian, by the deists and unbelievers of our age, by disputing against the authority of the Scripture, by ridiculing the strange narratives and sublime doctrines of the Bible, by setting the seeming contradictions in a blasphemous light, and then demanding, 'How can you prove, or how can you believe, that this book is the Word of God, or that the religion it teaches is divine?' In such an hour of contest, how happy is the Christian that can say, 'Though I be not able to solve all the difficulties in the Bible, nor maintain the sacred authority of it against the cavils of wit and learning; yet I am well assured that the doctrines of this book are sacred, and the authority of them divine. For when I heard and received them, they changed my nature, they subdued my sinful appetites, they made a new creature of me, and raised me from death to life; they made me love God above all things, and gave me the lively and well-grounded hope of his love: Therefore I cannot doubt but that the chief principles of this book are heavenly and divine, though I cannot so well prove that the very words and syllables of it are so too; for it is the sense of Scripture, and not the mere letters of it, on which I build my hope.'"

NOTE 14, PAGE 321.

If there is any one thing more than another that the church needs in our age, it is to realize the value of the Bible as a means of grace. There never was a time when more careful study of a merely intellectual kind was devoted to it. But even Christians seem to have grown sceptical as to its use in the sustenance of the Christian life.

NOTE 15, PAGE 322.

Lecture I., p. 7.

NOTE 16, PAGE 322.

Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. i., p. 87. Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 101.



## NOTE 17, PAGE 324.

Yet one who reads these arguments cannot help sympathizing with Cardinal Newman, when he says (*Grammar of Assent*, New York, 1870, p. 413): "If I am asked to use Paley's argument for my own conversion, I say plainly, I do not want to be converted by a smart syllogism; if I am asked to convert others by it, I say plainly, I do not care to overcome their reason without touching their hearts. I wish to deal not with controversialists but with inquirers."

## NOTE 18, PAGE 324.

Hume's *Essays*, 1777, vol. ii., p. 135: "Upon the whole, then, it appears that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof, and that even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof, derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavor to establish."

## NOTE 19, PAGE 325.

Among others I may mention Rothe, *Zur Dogmatik*, p. 80 seq.; Dorner, vol. i., p. 583 seq. (Eng. trans., vol. ii., p. 146 seq.); Frank, *Christliche Gewissheit*, vol. ii., p. 103 seq., p. 219 seq.; Ladd, *Doctrine of Sacred Scripture*, vol. i., p. 286 seq.; Fisher, *Supernatural Origin of Christianity*, p. 471 seq.; *Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, chaps. vii. and x.

## NOTE 20, PAGE 329.

See an interesting article in the *Nineteenth Century*, November, 1882, entitled *Modern Miracles*, by R. F. Clarke, S. J.

## NOTE 21, PAGE 329.

See the *Presbyterian Review*, July, 1883, *Modern Miracles*, by Rev. M. R. Vincent, D.D.; January, 1884, *Healing through Faith*, by Rev. R. L. Stanton, D.D.; and April, 1884, *Dr. Stanton on Healing through Faith*, by Rev. M. R. Vincent, D.D.

## NOTE 22, PAGE 331.

Frank, *Syst. der christl. Gewissheit*, vol. ii., p. 103: "The establishment of the personal Christian state, experienced by the Christian as a miracle in so far as it is conditioned by different factors from those of the creative order of nature, and pointing



back to the central miracle of the appearance of the Second Adam, affords the certain standard for the judgment of the individual miraculous events in the history of redemption, as the same are related in the scriptural record."

NOTE 23, PAGE 332.

Cf. Lecture IV., p. 140 seq. Watts, vol. i., p. 24: "The constant miracle of regeneration and converting grace."

NOTE 24, PAGE 333.

Works, ed. Walch, vol. vi., p. 295.

NOTE 25, PAGE 334.

Essays, 1777, vol. ii., p. 140.

NOTE 26, PAGE 336.

An excellent statement of the argument from prophecy in its modern form may be found in Fisher's Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief, p. 314 seq.

NOTE 27, PAGE 338.

The Christian has the advantage of two points of view. He is a combatant in the great struggle between good and evil, Christ and Satan, and as such is a partisan. But he can also raise himself to the divine point of view and behold the passing history *sub specie æternitatis*. From this vantage ground he sees in both good and evil, elements in a divine process. God causes the wrath of man to praise him, and restrains the remainder of wrath. Cf. Lecture V., p. 188 seq.

NOTE 28, PAGE 338.

See Lecture I., p. 27 seq.

NOTE 29, PAGE 340.

Das Leben Jesu, von Bernhard Weiss, Berlin, 1882, 2 vols.

NOTE 30, PAGE 341.

Joseph Ernest Renan, Vie de Jésus, first published in 1863.



## NOTE 31, PAGE 344.

Cf. The City of God, a Series of Discussions in Religion, by A. M. Fairbairn, D.D., Pt. Third, "The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith," pp. 213-252. Harris, Self-Revelation of God, p. 469 seq. Dorner, Gesammelte Abhandlungen, p. 71 seq.

## NOTES TO LECTURE X.

## NOTE 1, PAGE 345.

See Lecture I., Note 21.

## NOTE 2, PAGE 346.

Cf. Chalmers, Select Works, New York, 1850, vol. iv., p. 456 seq.

## NOTE 3, PAGE 351.

These words were written before the movement in the Presbyterian Church of the United States for the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith attained its present importance. It seems best to let them stand in their original form.

## NOTE 4, PAGE 353.

Cf. Dorner's System der christlichen Glaubenslehre, vol. i., p. 85 seq. (Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 98 seq.). Luthardt, Komp. der Dogmatik, 7th ed., p. 29. Luthardt gives the following definitions from Hollaz: "*Articuli fidei puri sunt partes doctrinæ christianæ de mysteriis divinis captu rationis humanæ sibi relictæ superioribus, divinitus tamen revelatis (e.g., the Trinity, the incarnation, and the like). Mixti dicuntur partes doctrinæ christianæ de illis rebus divinis, quæ tum ex lumine naturæ quadantenus sciuntur, tum ex supernaturali lumine revelationis divinæ creduntur (e.g., the being and attributes of God, and the like).*" The doctrine here stated does not materially differ from that of the mediæval theologians as given in Note 13, Lecture I.

## NOTE 5, PAGE 353.

Lecture VII., p. 245 seq.



## NOTE 6, PAGE 354.

Owen, Works, 1852, vol. iv., p. 54: "There are some doctrines revealed in the Scripture, and those of the most importance that are so revealed, which concern and contain things so above our reason that, without some previous supernatural disposition of mind, they carry in them no evidence of truth unto mere reason, nor of suitableness unto our constitution and end. There is required unto such an apprehension both the spiritual elevation of the mind by supernatural illumination, and a divine assent unto the authority of the revelation thereon, before reason can be so much as satisfied in the truth and excellency of such doctrines. Such are those concerning the holy Trinity, or the subsistence of one singular essence in three distinct persons, the incarnation of the Son of God, the resurrection of the dead, and sundry others, that are the most proper subjects of divine revelation."

## NOTE 7, PAGE 354.

The term came into use in the pietistical controversies in Germany during the latter part of the seventeenth century. See Gieseler's Church History, translated and edited by H. B. Smith, vol. v., p. 284 seq. Spener declared that "only a regenerate man possesses the true theology. Without the new birth it might be possible to attain to a *philosophy* of divine things, but not to a *theology*." Frank says (System der christlichen Gewissheit, vol. i. p. 164; Evans's trans., p. 156), speaking of the *theologia irregeneratorum*, "Men compute, in the study of it, with the given quantities, and the calculation may as such be correct; just as in mathematics one can rightly calculate with definite formulas, without needing to possess an acquaintance with the realities to which they have reference. But the relation between the natural subject and the Christian truth is from the outset vitiated by a contradiction," namely, that he judges the Christian realities, which he knows notionally but not experimentally, according to the standards of natural certainty.

## NOTE 8, PAGE 354.

For the reason stated in the last note the facts can only be known as notions, not as realities.



## NOTE 9, PAGE 354.

All facts are mysterious. It is only notions and the relations between notions that are wholly without mystery. The light which physical science throws upon the ultimate nature of the facts which it brings before us is very scanty. The "flower in the crannied wall" is full of mystery. Indeed, it is only in the sphere of religion that men insist that the admission of mystery is irrational. Yet if we should expect any class of facts to be mysterious, it might be expected to be the Christian facts. They involve an infinite element, which we cannot of course fully comprehend, and the relation of which to the finite must forever baffle us. Moreover, they are unique. There are no others of the same class by which we can explain them, and the analogies which we draw from other spheres must, from the nature of the case, be inadequate. But all this does not put them beyond the sphere of reason.

## NOTE 10, PAGE 354.

Fisher, *Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, p. 352.

## NOTE 11, PAGE 355.

See Lecture I., p. 6 seq., and Note 21. Also the present lecture, p. 345.

## NOTE 12, PAGE 356.

Cf. Lecture VII., p. 259 seq.

## NOTE 13, PAGE 357.

There are two reasons why the Christian Church has always resisted the influence of Unitarianism. One is that the teachings of the Bible require the formulation of a doctrine of the Trinity. The other is that Christian experience requires it. It was not the Nicene Council that gave us the doctrine of the Trinity, but the fact of the Trinity in the Bible and in the experience of the Christian that gave us the Nicene Council.

## NOTE 14, PAGE 358.

Cf. Bushnell, *Vicarious Sacrifice: Grounded on Principles of Universal Obligation*, 1866. Thus the title-page gave notice that the treatise was constructed on a radically false method, which could only lead to inadequate results. Bushnell came to realize



this himself, for his second book, in which he gave a new and much higher theory of the atonement, bears the title, *Forgiveness and Law : Grounded in Principles Interpreted by Human Analogies*, and the same is given to the later edition of the *Vicarious Sacrifice*, published in 1877.

NOTE 15, PAGE 358.

Cf. Farrar's *Critical History of Free Thought*, pp. 371, 372.

NOTE 16, PAGE 359.

*Biographical History of Philosophy*, Amer. ed., 1866, *Introd.*, p. xi.

NOTE 17, PAGE 359.

*Ibid.*, p. xxxi.

NOTE 18, PAGE 360.

Cf. *Der Beweis des Glaubens*, vol. i., p. 81 seq.: *Ueber den Glauben als die höchste Vernunft*, von R. Grau.

NOTE 19, PAGE 361.

In the *Philosophie der Religion*, Works, 1840, vol. xi., p. 20 seq.

NOTE 20, PAGE 361.

Kurtz, *Kirchengeschichte*, 11th ed., vol. i., pt. 2, p. 352.

NOTE 21, PAGE 362.

Harris *Self-Revelation of God*, pp. 524-526. Henry B. Smith, *Faith and Philosophy*, pp. 1-48.

NOTE 22, PAGE 362.

For a good statement of the argument, see Fisher, *The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, chap. xvi.: "The Argument for Christianity from a Comparison of it with Other Religions."

NOTE 23, PAGE 363.

See the *Light of Asia and the Light of the World*. A Comparison of the Legend, the Doctrine, and the Ethics of Buddha, with the Story, the Doctrine, and the Ethics of Christ. By S. H. Kellogg, D.D., 1885.

NOTE 24, PAGE 364.

See the *Confessions*, Bk. VII., ch. xxi., sect. 27. I have quoted the passage as it is given, both in English and Latin, by Coleridge in the *Aids to Reflection* (Works, New York, 1853, vol. i., p. 139).



## NOTE 25, PAGE 365.

Cf. the chart on p. 517 in *Dorchester's Problem of Religious Progress*.

## NOTE 26, PAGE 368.

Cf. *Lecture V.*, p. 188 seq.; and *Lecture IX.*, p. 336 seq.

## NOTE 27, PAGE 369.

Cf. *Herzog and Plitt, Real-Encyclopädie*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 544.

## NOTE 28, PAGE 376.

Cardinal Newman says (*Grammar of Assent*, New York, 1870, p. 406 seq.): The evidences of Christianity “presuppose a belief and perception of the Divine Presence, a recognition of his attributes and an admiration of his Person viewed under them, a conviction of the worth of the soul and of the reality and momentousness of the unseen world, an understanding that in proportion as we partake in our own persons of the attributes which we admire in him, we are dear to him, a consciousness on the contrary that we are far from partaking of them, a consequent insight into our guilt and misery, an eager hope of reconciliation to him, a desire to know and to love him, and a sensitive looking-out in all that happens, whether in the course of nature or of human life, for tokens, if such there be, of his bestowing on us what we so greatly need. These are specimens of the state of mind for which I stipulate in those who would inquire into the truth of Christianity.”

But who among the class of which we are speaking conforms to these requirements?







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# CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES AND HOMILETICS.

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